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**CHILDREN AS REFLECTIVE
PRACTITIONERS**

**AN ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT ABOUT TALK AS
APPRAISING IN SCHOOL MUSIC LESSONS**

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (Ed D)
September 2001

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M7131327

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to define, observe and evaluate appraising of children's own compositions in music lessons in one Secondary Comprehensive School with children aged 11 to 16 years where the researcher is also a teacher of music in the school. Through an action research framework, teaching strategies are adapted progressively to improve the learning situation that allows pupils to appraise most effectively and purposefully. The findings demonstrate different levels of talk in children about their composing work that represent their developing skills of critical thinking and analysis. From these a typology of levels of appraising is drawn up. The findings suggest that as children engage and empathise with their music compositions affectively, they appear to be able to talk more confidently about their work. The study considers whether, as children make sense of their work, they are able to understand more than their talk reveals. The need for musical vocabulary, the role of the teacher in nurturing appraising of composing work in the classroom and the role of conceptual understanding are other issues which are considered. It is suggested in the findings that as pupils develop their appraising skills to higher levels of performance, they also become effective, reflective practitioners. The research sees both the teacher researcher and the pupils engaging in appraising as reflective practitioners.

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

The Focus

My research project is an ethnographic case study in which I am also the teacher engaging in participant observation of some of my own classes. The account is therefore a reflexive one set within a framework of action research. Through a process of progressive focussing, the research reflects on the outcomes of a number of different changes of teaching strategy and organisation in the music lessons of 11 to 16 year old pupils in one Secondary School.

The focus of this case study is to explore different ways of appraising pupils' own compositions in music lessons. Appraising in this project (which is defined more clearly in chapter 2) is the way children respond to their own and others' composing work through their talk with others, pupils and the teacher. Appraising here is reflective and evaluative of the work in process for both pupils and teachers. The National Curriculum for Music (DfEE, 1999) refers to appraising as, communicating ideas and feelings about music, and also, as a part of the process of adapting pupils' musical ideas, refining and improving their own and others' work. As a communicating process, it is about listening, responding, thinking and making choices and evaluative judgements about creative work (Pratt & Stephens, 1995). Appraising has in the past often been referred to as listening and responding to recorded or 'live' professionally performed music. For the purposes of this research, a narrower field is chosen, that of appraising children's own composing work. This follows Bunting (1977) who suggested, that as children reach secondary school they need to identify with 'familiar everyday music'. To be in touch with the 'vernacular' in the child's perspective is likely to help them to appraise more effectively. The 'vernacular' here is seen to be the children's own composing work_ rather than less familiar professionally performed music. In narrowing the field of appraising to talking and thinking about composing, manifest through talk, other ways of appraising are not considered here. In a different context these might be: responding to music through movement or writing another composition or poem. Through thinking about the music that they are

composing, children are inevitably attempting to make sense of the ideas involved in the task. Through talk with others and with the teacher, children construct meanings. Appraising is therefore seen as part of a constructivist approach to classroom learning.

At the time of beginning the research, appraising was central to the National Curriculum for England (DES, 1991) at all key stages. It appeared as one of two attainment targets: the first, 'performing and composing' and the second, 'listening and appraising'. (Attainment targets set out the knowledge, skills and understandings that pupils of different abilities are expected to achieve by the end of each key stage, in this case the first three years of Secondary education.) At this time teachers appeared to be confused about the term 'appraising', about its meaning and relevance in lessons. Flynn and Pratt (1995) worked with non-specialist music curriculum leaders from the primary schools around Huddersfield to explore the many ways which children can appraise music. They reported uncertainty about the teachers' understanding of the term. My secondary teacher colleague also expressed the view in the early stages of this research, that appraising was listening to music and responding to it. While this is an accurate definition of appraising, it is also a limited one and it fails to take account of the many ways in which children can develop appraising skills by appraising their own work. By the time this research was being written up, appraising was outlined more clearly and specifically in the revised National Curriculum orders (DfEE, 1999), as involving children in the appraising of their own work and that of others (see chapter 2 for a fuller account of what the National Curriculum stated). Appraising talk will take many forms in this research: between peers, as talk between a child and the teacher in the classroom while the rest of the class listens, and as student and teacher talk about work in a one-to-one interview situation. In different contexts the relationship between the activity and the nature of the talk is analysed and evaluated.

Rationale

This study is important because it is one of the only studies of how children talk about their own compositions. It is a study which relates how the

process of appraising can be effected in the classroom in different organisational ways using a number of different teaching or learning strategies. Classroom observations demonstrate ways of appraising in a process which integrates listening, composing and performing such as is advocated by the National Curriculum. Furthermore, the thinking skills involved in appraising through analysis and evaluation processes are explored and manifest through talk.

As a result of these classroom observations and analyses of the data collected, I was able to draw up a typology of appraising which suggests that appraising skills operate at different levels. The discussion also considers the question of whether a command of musical terminology and conceptual understanding is a necessary pre-requisite for listening to music or when composing music, or whether intuitive listening or composing is just as valid. The typology of appraising drawn up here from the findings is original in the way that it draws attention to the different levels in which children operate when appraising their work. Teachers in viewing this typology are then able to use the information that it provides to set up teaching strategies which attempt to maximise the opportunities for children to reach new levels in their talk. An example of this is provided in the research of cycle three.

The Research Questions

What are the distinctive elements of appraising when children talk with others (adults or peers) about their composing?

Through observing children in the classroom when appraising in different ways, I hope to be able to articulate the distinctive characteristics of appraising when children talk about their work. I hope to be able to outline the kind of verbal responses to questions that children give, and the nature of conversations children have while composing when adults are not present.

Is children's thinking about and understanding of the music more complex than their talk about it, as manifest in musical output and dialogue?

Clearly when children compose, the teacher can hear that there is understanding of a particular musical idea or device by the way the child has used it in their music. They do not necessarily need to talk about it. The research attempts to explore whether children's thinking and understanding about the music might be more mature than their verbal discourse about it?

Can we learn about children's understanding of the music through their talk? Can we link this to the way they construct meanings and understandings?

Children learn by doing and by thinking. Will their talk about their composing task reveal some of this process thought? Will I be able to judge that they have learnt about a particular musical process or skill through their talk about it? Is appraising their practical work one of the ways in which children learn by making sense of what they are doing?

What is the role of musical vocabulary to describe concepts in the appraising process?

The previous question implies that part of the learning process assumed here is that of acquiring conceptual understanding. Musical terminology is related to acquiring concepts because new concepts are classified by naming them. What is the need for a musical vocabulary and does talking about work in progress require terminology or can talk be productive without it?

What is the role of the teacher in talking to children about their work?

In this study a variety of ways of organising the classroom is explored and in each the role of the teacher changes. The research will take a critical stance in reflecting on how the teacher's role affects the talk engaged in by pupils about their work.

How does the nature of process talk and product talk differ?

This research will observe mainly process talk but some previous research in this field has appraised finished arts products. Since appraising involves evaluation and reflection, it is assumed that the nature of the talk in each

case will be different. The study will reflect on the differences and look at the advantages and disadvantages of each type.

Does appraising contribute to musical critical thinking?

Appraising pupils' own pieces of work is a skill development activity. Ultimately, teachers hope that through regular appraising, children will develop critical thinking skills of analysis and affective response which will allow them to become musically informed listeners. This research hopes to discover whether there are developmental stages of appraising allowing children to progress to talk in a critical analytical way about their work.

Are there apparent stages of appraising when talking about composing?

The data will be analysed to consider whether children go through stages of appraisal and if so, what these stages involve. The findings will be used to suggest whether these are developmental.

A description of the case study site

The Secondary County High School where the research is conducted is located in the North West of England on the outskirts of a city but positioned in a village environment. Of the 1,250 students in the school, most are white and British. The school's neighbourhood is a small village where as well as the school there is a large, well known College of Law. The houses in the village are largely expensive and sought after. There is a thriving shop and post office, a popular public house, two churches (Anglican and Methodist) and a much cherished village pond. Despite the idyllic setting, most of the pupils are transported to the school in many double decker buses. The school works hard to get its pupils through GCSE and A level examinations with good results although vocational courses are being introduced gradually for the small number of pupils who require more practical and vocationally relevant courses. A recent inspection declared it as 'a very good school'.

The buildings are a mixture of 1960's brick with late glass walled additions. A few pre-fabricated mobile classrooms still exist and building work is adding accommodation to the school at the present time. The music suite

was built in 1993, three years before the teacher researcher took up the post as Head of Music. The music department consists of two large classrooms, one of which is dedicated to Music Technology with 15 computer workstations and the other which features in lesson observations in the research. In addition there are two spacious practice rooms which are also used for lesson observation. As well as the Head of Department, there are two part-time music teachers. One of these has been in the school for four years and is observed teaching in Cycle 1 of the research. The music department is thriving with over 200 pupils taking instrumental lessons from seven visiting teachers. The Wind Band was recently acclaimed in a local music competition as outstanding and unusually possessing a wide range of instruments for a single high school band. Instrumental ensembles and orchestras are well attended. Choral activities are less well developed in the department at the present time.

The Researcher

I have been a full time teacher of music for over 15 years. I trained in a College of Education in the 1970s where I was awarded a degree in Music Education. In the late 1980s on returning to teaching after a break, I studied part-time for a Master's degree in Creative Arts Education at a local College of Higher Education. This later led to some part-time teaching on Master's courses in Music Education at the same college. After receiving a prize for my dissertation, I felt motivated to write a number of articles on aspects of music education with relevance to my teaching which were accepted and published in national education journals (Major, 1993,1996,2000). I later studied with the Open University on their masters course in education before embarking on this present research project.

As a teacher I have adopted a reflexive stance on what I do in the classroom. My study of current issues in Music Education has complemented my work with children in the classroom and led me to try out new approaches to learning. I have worked in two previous schools where achievements were not as high and where children came from more varied backgrounds. My present school has the most up-to-date and extensive music technology equipment of any school in the locality and music technology is a feature of

all courses from ages 11 to 19 years. My aim is to motivate children in my classes to achieve their full potential, whatever their ability, in their music making and understanding. My present interest in appraising arose when I worked as Head of Music in a school in Wales when the National Curriculum was introduced with three attainment targets (DES, 1991a). Alongside, 'composing' and 'performing' the third attainment target was 'appraising'. The practise of appraising was adopted in schools in Wales immediately as something which teachers did in relation to children's composing and performing. In this way all three areas were treated holistically. On returning to teach in England, I found that teachers' understanding of appraising was more uncertain than in Wales and it was at this time that I embarked on exploring appraising in my own work as a research project.

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Appraising music is responding in different ways to what we hear. It involves listening carefully to what is being appraised. When we appraise, we think actively about the music. This may be happening while we are listening passively or while we are composing the music. We are making choices when we compose music based on what we are doing and our choices involve us in evaluating. We choose, select or reject sounds (Pratt & Stephens, 1995, pp16-17). Appraising helps us further to understand the processes involved in music making and also in music thinking. This is a theme which is investigated by a number of recent music educationists (for example, Burnard, 2000). Here appraising involves reflection on what we are doing and how we think about what we are doing. Often appraising requires background factual knowledge or an understanding of the elements of music such as the pitch, rhythm, texture or dynamics involved in the pieces composed or heard. In this case our appraisal of the music helps us to insert it into what we already know about this style or genre. At a more intuitive level our appraising might lead us to move to the music, stretching high to demonstrate high-pitched sounds and moving downwards for low pitched sounds. In this way young children are able to demonstrate their understanding of pitch. Their response is affective and their appraisal is demonstrated in their movements. They are thinking about the music as they do this. It is also therefore a cognitive process. They are constructing an understanding of the pitch of the music (the high and low), and their physical movements reflect their ideas and reinforce their understandings.

Demonstrating what is heard in the music composed is also a way of appraising (Pratt & Stephens, 1995, p15). In a composing task, children can demonstrate their understanding of a conceptual or structural idea in the way that they use that particular idea in their piece of music. They can demonstrate that they understand ternary (ABA) form by the structure of their composition. The teacher then knows that they have understood this structural device through their use of it. Talking about the music composed

or heard, what it means to you or what it makes you think of (relating the music to the sound of a waterfall, for example) is another way of responding or appraising. Talking complements the demonstrating of the composition, it allows the composer to elaborate their ideas and it helps them to clarify the purposes and processes involved in its creation. Appraising in this study looks at the way children aged 11 to 16 years respond through talk about their own and others' compositions. Appraising here involves reflection upon their work and the work of those with whom they are working.

Understanding 'appraising'

Appraising as a term appeared quite suddenly in the first National Curriculum Orders for music in 1992 (DES, 1992). It appeared as part of the second attainment target 'listening and appraising'. In the Welsh Orders (DES, 1991) it stood alone as one of three attainment targets: Performing, Composing and Appraising. The consultation interim report prior to this had not included the word appraising (DES, 1991b). The term replaced 'Knowing' and was said to imply 'audience-listening' rather than a knowledge of musical history (Swanwick, 1992, pp26-28). There was little explanation of what was meant by the term 'appraising' at that time. The Non-statutory Guidelines (NCC, 1992) described appraising music as, "appreciation of live and recorded music". The word 'appreciation' here suggests a formal study of music and indeed the 1992 Curriculum clarified this as, "the ability to listen to and appraise music, including knowledge of musical history, our diverse musical culture and a variety of other musical traditions" (DES, 1992). The suggestion here of 'live' music is not qualified and could relate to professional 'live' performances rather than, as in the later revised curriculum, "their own and others' compositions and performances" (DFE, 1995). For many teachers at that time, appraising implied critical response to recorded music. Critical here implied a "knowledge and understanding of musical history and theory, including the ability to listen to and appraise music"(DES,1991b). The National Curriculum Council (NCC) Music Group emphasised this in their definition of the second attainment target above. Many musicians and educationists attempted to get this changed before the publication of the orders in 1992.

Their argument was that knowledge and understanding is not ‘chalk and talk’ about music but should be related to children’s experiences in performing and composing. However, in delivery of the curriculum, teachers were left unsure about what the word appraising implied. The RAMP project (Research into Applied Musical Perception) at Huddersfield University (Flynn and Pratt, 1995) found that primary music teachers particularly felt confused about the meaning of the term ‘appraising’ and this research project explored ways of appraising recorded music.

The National Curriculum Music Working Group (MWG) cite the definition arrived at by the RAMP unit’s project (Pratt & Stephens, 1995). The latter viewed ‘appraising’ as that which is carried out by pupils in their composing, performing and listening and that it happens when, “they listen purposefully....respond thoughtfully.....think actively....(and) make choices and evaluative judgements about music.” Flynn and Pratt (1995) clarified these global aims. The RAMP project teachers suggested that children ‘listen purposefully’ so that they can change something that is not quite right in their music. They listen in order to develop a greater awareness of what is happening in the music or they simply listen in order to enjoy the music. They ‘respond thoughtfully’ to music by creating something extra musical, such as a dance or a poem. Teachers in the RAMP project research were conscious of the need to include aesthetic or affective responses as well as those which highlighted technical elements of the music (Flynn & Pratt, 1995, p138). Children appraise when they ‘think actively’ about what they want to achieve and then try to achieve it. They will try out, revise and refine until they are satisfied that they have achieved the musical effect that they are seeking. Teachers in the RAMP project felt that it was essential to encourage children not to accept their first idea but continue to work on their piece of work until it satisfies them. Changing ideas is about choosing some and rejecting others. Opinions about music should be nurtured and valued in music. Evaluative judgements made by children here are related to what they see as suitable for the context or task which has been set. Evaluative here implies that children should give informed opinions based on musical knowledge or information which they possess already. The RAMP project acknowledged the need for accumulated

experience and knowledge in order effectively to appraise. Significantly, they viewed appraising, “as a way of coming to know and understand the processes involved in music and musical thinking” (Pratt & Stephens, 1995, p17). The implication here might be that the ‘processes’ involved are technical, conceptual or structural understandings which inform musical thinking. The suggestion is that appraising is only about understanding the processes by which we think about music and that the processes are the conceptual understandings or ‘elements’ of music heard or performed or composed. This would suggest that affective or intuitive responses to music are not valued as a part of appraisal of music. Mellor’s research, (2000) takes up this point arguing that the 1995 Music National Curriculum did indeed relate all mention of appraising to the ‘music elements’ of pitch, dynamics and texture rather than to intuitive ‘gut’ responses to the music. It is important therefore that our emotive responses to music are not ignored in any definition or explanation of appraising.

Appraising then can be seen as a means of understanding the processes involved in musical thinking, in the way that children listen and actively make choices as they work, but also as critical thinking in the way that they might use accumulated experience and knowledge to inform their evaluative judgements about the music. Appraising music involves listening and responding and that involves in turn an affective reaction to what is heard.

Relevant Literature – Appraising

The RAMP research project (Flynn & Pratt, 1995) explicitly investigates the way primary teachers, who are not music specialists understand and put into practise appraising in the classroom. Two features set this research apart: it looks specifically at the concept of appraising and it explores it in real classroom situations. The concept is defined broadly in terms of behaviours when children are appraising. The findings include a programme of work which uses the understandings gained by the teachers, in practise. They identify four linear stages of appraising which children go through: to listen, recognise, reflect and take action. These stages, although referred to as ‘linear’ (Flynn & Pratt, 1995, p142) were also seen by the teachers in the

project as cyclical or even spiral. They noticed that as children composed they listened to what they played, noticed something, reflected on it and then listened again moving along the same process again and again. Talking about the work with peers or with a teacher could also be part of this process as reflection. The teacher might listen with the pupil, then talk with the pupil about ideas heard. As a result the pupil may reconsider his or her ideas and change the way the music sounds before listening again. Part of the reflection process in my study is talk, dialogue, to describe or explain.

The RAMP project identified appraising as a part of all music activity and as an internal mental process. The research found that an important part of appraising progression is concerned with moving from directed to independent activities. Teachers in the project observed that children experience something; they use it over time; they then apply it in a different situation before they independently recognise it. All this they felt represented a stage where the teacher had a large part to play in instructing pupils or setting up tasks which help them to learn. Children can then move to a more independent stage where the Music National Curriculum requires children to 'recognise, identify, distinguish and discriminate'. Here pupils will then recognise something they have met before, name it, distinguish it from others which are similar (for example, it has 3 beats) and discriminate within this further (for example, divide the beats up into different rhythms).

The authors of this research conclude that appraising activities may help us to understand the way we engage with music and musical thinking. Furthermore, there is research that explores aspects of dialogue in response to musical activities (Hughes, 1999) and research which looks at the way children think about music (Burnard, 2000). There is also recent research that looks at composing and improvising where teachers or researchers talk about the activity with the children as part of the process of understanding what they mean when they improvise or compose (Campbell, 1998).

Children's thinking about music

Appraising as talk allows us to try to understand what the child is thinking or intending when composing or when listening to music. A number of authors have explored this idea with a common theme, to think as the child does and to try to move away from the pre-conceived ideas which adults bring to the classroom context when listening to children's work. Mellor's work on language used by children in the appraisal of each others' compositions (Mellor, 2000) involved children in a written assessment of each others' composing as each group demonstrated their work. The response required was a comment and a mark out of 10. Mellor then used this data as a basis for both quantitative and qualitative analysis. She argues that: "The results provide verbal evidence of how children listen and appraise music in relation to the Music National Curriculum" (Mellor, 2000, p260). Her research strategy gives no indication of whether she gave more ideas or suggestions to the children of what to include in their comments. 'Verbal evidence' in the statement above surely ought to read 'written evidence'. The idea of collating 154 children's comments about their peers' composing work in lessons conducted by the research as the teacher with children aged between 9 and 13 years, appears to be a contrived task when they are asked to make a comment and give a mark out of 10. Appraisal is summative here. Children's comments are therefore evaluations or assessments. Appraisal is being used as synonymous with assessment. Her work does not attempt to focus on oral evaluations or on work and appraisals in the process of composing when refinements can be made as a result of comments made.

Mellor further asked student teachers (music specialists and non-specialists which she calls 'novices') to respond to six compositions randomly selected from the above research (Mellor, 2000), and from this she concluded that by introducing too much terminology, teachers are stifling the creative, emotional and affective ways of thinking. 'Syntactical listening', she argues, is objective and analytical and diminishes the richness of the listening experience (Mellor, 1999). By this she means that objective technical responses are considered 'right' as standards of musical achievement instead

of encouraging learners to consider the “personal value of music” (Mellor, 1999, p157). Mellor’s findings (1999) demonstrate that ‘experts’ tend to communicate the value of music in technical terms whereas those without specialist training retain a more intuitive feeling for what they listen to. She criticises the approach of many secondary school teachers in fragmenting music into its component parts, described through its ‘musical elements’. The affective personal feeling for music is lost. Intuitive perception is seen here to be valued more than technical expertise. To “share and make meaning” with those we teach offers an exciting approach to appraising (Mellor 1999, p157). To nurture affective comments and to encourage talk about preferences, personal value and emotional perceptions is important at all ages. Mellor stays firmly in the ‘intuitive’ school of thought since she shuns the development of technical terms and a development of critical understanding and analysis through appraisal activities related to composing. Her approach is affective rather than cognitive. It relies on an instant ‘gut’ response rather than on technical expertise. Mellor argues that teaching music ‘the technical way’ is a current trend in the Secondary School curriculum and diminishes the richness of the listening experience (Mellor,1999,p156-157). Mellor appears to switch from talk about listening to music, to talk about composing music. Both are important parts of her research. She criticises an approach which relates to listening by breaking down music into its component parts (the music elements of pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture and structure). In listening to music one can empathise with an approach which seeks to move away from analysis of what one hears, to an approach which values simply the effect or power that the music has on the senses. However, in composing music children need guidance and direction. How can children make progress without developing conceptual and structural skills which give the music shape? Mellor’s task to the children in her research classes was to compose, “what they thought made a good tune” (Mellor, 2000,p249). Taking into account that composing for many of these children in her research was a new experience, it would be interesting to see how she planned to progress without introducing structural or conceptual ideas to improve and develop their composing skills.

Hughes (1999) in turn suggests that descriptive vocabulary to depict feeling aroused or pictures conjured up by music is important but that in some contexts technical terms are appropriate to bring out specific meanings in the music. Hughes advocates that teachers should listen and respond to pupils appropriately, that discussion between teachers and pupils about their composing work is very important. Her research looks at ways of developing discussion techniques with student teachers who found talking to pupils about their work, difficult. Hughes' research examines appraising from the teaching perspective rather than from the learning outcomes of the children. She concurs with Mellor's viewpoint that teachers need to take a more empathetic stance in listening to pupils' expressed feelings when talking about their creating work.

In Glover's recent book, (2000) the theme of trying to hear music as the child does and for adults to "de-centre from one's own perspective" (p24) is continued. Glover sees the difference between child and adult listening as maturation and "musical enculturation" (Glover, p23). She views teaching as helping pupils to become more aware of the processes they use. As to be expected from the title 'Children Composing....', she is concerned largely with the process (unlike Mellor), rather than the product of compositions. She sees the teacher's role here as tracking the child's progress through listening to composing in process. Her work is not about appraising but she does suggest that talk might help children to reflect on how music is made up. This involves learning how "music works musically" (Glover, 2000, p61) so that children can build up techniques to develop their skills. In order to 'musically' understand compositions, Glover explains, children need to increase their experiences to judge musical effect and to listen and to decide on the aesthetic result required. Glover sees the need for teachers to provide a model in their talk. Feedback can describe or analyse musical features and structure or it can discuss subjective responses. She views both as equally important. She expects conversations about the music to focus on supplying the vocabulary and language which supports the child's train of thought. She emphasises the importance of following the child's own musical interests when they talk but also for the teacher to highlight, when relevant, an awareness of the musical elements with their related terminology. In

doing so, little by little children will become more aware of what they are doing and this will be supported by their ability to describe using appropriate terminology (Glover, 2000). Any talk about the process should foster the idea that everyone hears differently and so children will develop independent skills and techniques. She does see that both reflection on children's listening to their own music and recognising and describing its musical features from the earliest age, of key importance. She lists topics on which talk can focus which appear to have some sense of hierarchy in that she suggests that children begin naming features, describing music and using vocabulary, and that they eventually reveal subjective, affective responses. In this way Glover differs from Mellor. Glover sees more subjective responses developing with maturity and experience while Mellor views subjective responses as important at every age or stage. The fact that Mellor is working with end products and Glover is appraising work in process does however suggest that different contexts may reveal differences in verbal response. In a previous piece of research, Glover (1990) wrote about children's musical understanding. Here, she views music-making as a form of 'thinking aloud' (1990, p260).

In contrast to Glover, Burnard's research concerns (2000a; 2000b) are with the processes of improvising and composing and the differences between these two. She sees talk as a way of understanding these processes in order to improve the way children compose. This implies that a focus on technical terms is not necessary but rather her methods of persuading children to question and understand the composing process and in doing so construct meanings is a more valuable way forward. Burnard sets out to investigate how children think about their improvising and composing and how they perceive the differences between these two. She found that children's thinking differed in how they moved from one to the other and indeed whether they perceived a difference existing between the two. She concluded that children should discuss what it is that is intrinsic to their own musical experience and to reflect on what it is to improvise and compose. By acknowledging the importance of what children say, "they will socially construct the ways they compose and improvise in the classroom" (Burnard, 2000a, p22). Sharing understandings will help children to recognise why

they are doing a certain activity leading to an awareness of how they are doing it. By talking then about their music composing, teachers are enhancing their learning. Burnard stresses the need for children to talk about, reflect upon and write about their musical experiences. In this way teachers are encouraging children to be more reflective.

Campbell (1998) also finds that through listening to music at an early age, children begin to discern “its pulse, accents, and patterns, its melodic shapes, pitch registers and directions” (p216). Their performances of music (and also composing of music) are dependent on their perception of these qualities. She found that children used colourful and unusual phrases to describe music: “Children need to be able to describe and communicate to others what they hear”(p216). Understanding of ‘musical element’ words is essential and they must be taught and learned before they can be used with confidence. When children do not possess musical terminology, argues Campbell, they make up their own and this is often refreshing. However, *she maintains these are not sufficient for communicating precisely what children musically perceive.*

The need to educate children through talk in order to be able to communicate intelligently about music heard or composed is a theme which runs through the writings of most of the authors reviewed. It is a modelling process where the teacher uses words in context to help pupils to understand their full meaning. It is acquired little by little over time as the music engaged in and the talk about it allow new understandings to be constructed. Most of the authors reviewed here engaged in talk about the composing work with children in their research. Some writers feel that talking about music using technical vocabulary to help children build up specialist words to explain about music hampers their expression (Mellor, 2000). Mellor however appraised products rather than work in process which may affect her findings. Glover sees the value in developing independent skills and techniques and talking about composing is likely to develop from responding with descriptive ideas to more value laden subjective ideas later with maturity and experience. Glover does not reject the ideas of affective responses to music in very young children. She emphasises spontaneous

responses in music making. She does however suggest the need for pupils to model teachers in naming musical features such as, “rhythm pattern, steady beat, getting louder....” (Glover, 2000, p62) She suggests that teachers should encourage descriptions and discussion of simple structure, characteristics and even simple analysis as well as affective response, “how the music affects me.” (p62)

What music means to children

Burnard’s research focuses on talk as a reflective practise which should help children to make sense of or construct their own meaning of what they are doing when they improvise or compose. Green (1999) explores the social construction of musical meaning in the context of music experiences. For musical experience to occur, musical materials have to be organised in such a way as to have relationships with each other. When connections are made by the listener then meanings are constructed and the music is appreciated. Implicitly here, the building up of musical language and understandings is necessary to allow the listener to make more connections and to enable meanings to be constructed. Is the intuitive approach of Mellor consistent with a constructive approach in the classroom? Are ‘gut responses’ to music helpful in allowing children to develop musically? Clearly affective responses are important but Green implies that enjoyment and understanding occurs when links are made between affective (an appreciation of what is heard), cognitive (an understanding of the structure or other musical device), and extra musical events (for example, remembering a TV theme that it resembles).

Burnard’s research (2000a) focuses on helping children to make sense of their composing work through reflective talk. In a process which tries to make sense of their composing, children are encouraged to ask why they are doing it and how they are doing it. Composing and improvising and the way these interrelate or remain separate and children’s understandings of these two processes is a major foci of her work. At the same time she adopts a constructivist perspective on the twin processes. Bernard encourages children then to talk about and reflect upon not only their creations but also

on what it means to improvise and compose. She focuses on children's meaning making through experiential descriptions. She supports the views of Mellor and Glover in urging teachers not to impose their values onto children and not to allow preconceptions to interfere with the way they approach creative work in the classroom. "Learning should be perceived as meanings negotiated amongst learners and their teachers" (Bernard, 2000b, p21). She stresses the importance of teachers valuing what children say and by giving them the opportunity to articulate their understandings, learning is enhanced. Children should therefore reflect on what it is to improvise or compose. As a result, Bernard relates this reflective practise to the way in which children make sense of these processes - sharing understandings on why, what and how they are doing things allows them to construct socially the ways they compose and improvise.

There appears to be a tension between the idea of allowing music to 'speak for itself' as a feeling response and the idea that, to understand the music properly, we need educating so that we can make better sense of what we hear through the acquisition of greater conceptual understanding and a musical vocabulary. These two ways of responding to music are on the one hand affective and on the other, requiring cognitive thought to work alongside the affective response¹. Burnard suggests that reflective talk helps children to make sense of their composing work (2000b). Glover (1990), on the other hand advocates the gradual introduction of musical terminology and 'technical' understanding to enhance children's appreciation skills. There may be a difference in the 'knowledge' needed for composing effectively and the more passive experience of listening to recorded music which can be 'received' by the listener as a totally enjoyable experience without having any background information about it. Composing, especially in order to make progress, may require knowledge relating to structure or to harmony to give it coherent shape and meaning. Reflective talk therefore about composing will then need to include these ideas whereas talk about a pure listening experience may relate to the way the music affected the person or the way it made them feel. The talk therefore mirrors the listening experience in being affective in nature too.

¹ See Major 1993 for a fuller account of the way affective and cognitive responses work together in the classroom in any musical activity.

Campbell (1998) highlights the importance of understanding the child's likes and dislikes, their background and their ideas about music. Every child, "brings her unique perspective to a song or instrumental piece so that its meaning is based on who she is and what her experience has been" (p174). Campbell's research involved interviews with children of primary school age where they gave her information about themselves and their thoughts about music prior to immersing themselves in a composing project. She found that children often linked music to an extra musical event such as a heroic struggle or calm after a storm. She sees music as helping children to relate to who they are because it can offer "powerful aural images" (Campbell, 1998, p175) and associative meanings. When children improvise and compose spontaneously they are expressing what they are thinking at that time. Music provides a way for children to "think and feel aloud" (p175). Compositions hold what they have thought and felt, for future performances. She acknowledges also that previous musical experience or training will also influence childrens' creative work.

Hennessey (1998) describes the constructivist classroom as a place where creativity and independence is recognised. She sees the teacher's role as guiding, resourcing and stimulating creative thinking and making positive criticism. Through their contact with the teacher, children will acquire the tools for thinking. Their interaction with 'more knowledgeable others' allow new ideas to coincide with learned skills and materials and resources absorbed through previous listening, performing and composing. From it comes new circumstances and new ideas. Talking between pupils and between the teachers and pupils can assist in the process of learning. Hennessey suggests questions which assist in the process, such as, "may I hear how.....", "Have you thought about an ending?", and afterwards when appraising the creative product, "what did you like about....?", and "Did you notice when.....?" She maintains that the theoretical model offered by social constructivism will underpin and clarify the relationship between the learner and the teacher. For the social constructivist, personal constructs (meanings created by an individual through making connections between what is already known and new ideas) are formed in a social context. Understandings are gained through social interaction with others. As a

result, we make sense of what we do through what we see and hear around us, making connections between what we know and what we hear or see or experience.

To construct meanings involves thinking and reflection. It also happens through the experiencing of processes. It is not a passive way of learning. Burnard argues that children need to talk and reflect both orally and in written form about their musical experiences, “in order to help make meaning of their learning.” (Burnard, 2000a) Reflecting on composing work is a constructivist activity. It enables those engaged in reflection to make connections, and making links helps them to construct ideas and understandings more clearly in a gradual process of learning. Glasersfeld (1987) used the term ‘viable knowledge’ to explain the experiential nature of learning where understandings are explored through practical activities. Implicit in this is the reflection upon these activities in order to construct meanings.

Vygotsky wrote extensively about learning by doing, with the teacher as facilitator. He put forward the idea that when the very young child internalises speech, the thinking and understanding at that stage is likely to be far greater than anything the child can put into words. Piaget had suggested earlier that inner speech led to verbal thinking and then to silent thought but Vygotsky’s theories were grounded in the idea of shared social behaviour. Connections between ideas might be made by the child leading to greater understanding, as a result of shared social activity. Talk and dialogue is an important part of this process. The processes described by Vygotsky as essential to learning are those which are also central to the construction of meanings when undertaking practical activities. New understandings come through Vygotsky’s ‘zone of proximal development’ (Britton, 1989) when the learner comes to a new understanding through interaction with someone who helps such as the teacher. The construction of new understandings can be helped through appraising composing work in progress. Burnard (2000) maintains that this kind of appraising helps children to understand the processes of how to compose. “Sharing understanding will help the children to recognise why they are doing a

certain activity and what they are doing, leading to an awareness of how they are doing it. Thus, by giving children the opportunity to articulate their understandings we enhance learning.” (Bernard, 20001, p22)

Music and Critical Understanding

Mellor (2000) is reported as not wishing to encourage ‘syntactical listening’ (see p.13). She criticises secondary school teachers for fragmenting the descriptions of music into its component parts. Her research findings suggest that listeners with no musical expertise are more intuitive and their descriptions more spontaneous and imaginative. However, some authors do encourage ‘musical language’ development as learning towards a mature musical understanding. Glover for example writes: “ Musical understanding is the exercise of a power: it involves ‘using’ and not just ‘having’ musical thinking skills and responses; using within a whole musical context and towards one’s own musical purposes” (Glover, 1990, p258). Musical understanding, on this view, involves learning about the music while ‘doing’ in the context of music making. It involves musical thinking. It involves gradually constructing understandings of the processes involved allied to the learning of terminology introduced by the teacher or by talking to other children about the process of the work. Above all argues Glover, it is about work in process. Discussing the finished artwork, here a composition, uses different skills of appraisal. Previous studies of appraising have looked at only the product (Mellor, 2000, Ross et al, 1993). Talk between the teacher and pupil in the process of their work is important. In Glover’s work with student teachers, (1990) she describes how she encouraged them to talk with the children, “to reflect on and categorise language use towards developing a critical language” (p261). To develop critical thinking skills in music could be one goal of appraising work in the classroom.

Swanwick’s work (1994) rejects intuitive approaches to musical understanding. He uses epistemological thinking to ‘ground’ his ideas in the realms of aesthetic knowledge. He maintains that ‘intuitive knowledge’ is much more than day dreaming; that it is an active way of construing the

world, of meaning making. The very idea of linking intuition with knowledge appears to be contradictory. Swanwick views intuitive knowledge as a bridge between sensory and logical or analytical knowledge. In listening to music then, we 'hear', we 'feel' then 'analyse'. For Swanwick, understanding something of the musical structure of a piece, how it is composed, allows us to listen with a new level of meaning. Intuition and analysis is not viewed as hierarchical but rather it has a dialectic relationship. Swanwick (1994) uses Bruner's term 'symbolic embedding' to describe the process where music is heard with a focal point rather than as background listening. Swanwick further identifies two levels of analysis of music: primary or intrinsic which involves wordless thinking about music where intuitive thoughts are interpreted; and secondary or extrinsic analysis where reflective discourse about the music leads to new insights. The latter, he maintains, lies at the heart of music education.

Developmental Stages of Music learning

In relation to other authors reviewed, Swanwick's ideas place the child in the classroom as fitting into a 'model' or category. Swanwick's spiral of musical development (1990) sees children moving from one level of musical understanding to another in an invariant sequence through four successive stages of development. From exploration of sound materials (exploring the tone colour of different instruments or making an interesting glissando on a xylophone) to a growing awareness of patterns in music (where children of 4 to 9 years of age imitate ideas with a greater awareness of expression) to a stage of imaginative play where children of ages 10 to 15 imitate familiar styles of music and where structural considerations become more important in the music and finally to his symbolic' mode of musical experience where music's affective power will be demonstrated with pupils able "to reflect on the experience and to articulate something of these responses to others" (Swanwick, 1990,p79). Each stage is age-related. In the same way as Piaget anticipates the child reaching a level at a particular stage of development, so Swanwick's spiral and his ideas outlined earlier, would expect the child to go through these stages. As a spiral of course, it is assumed that children will re-visit previous understandings as each new

level is reached. However, this approach is in direct conflict with the constructivist classroom context which encourages children to make meaning of what they encounter and develop their concepts individually, constructing understandings as they experience them - each person's understanding being unique to themselves. The data for Swanwick's model of learning, was gathered by Tillman as a result of observing 48 children composing over a long period of time (Swanwick & Tillman, 1986). This might suggest that the findings should therefore be applicable for all children but a model which works well in one situation is not necessarily applicable in another. As a basis for assessment it might be restrictive if applied rigidly, not allowing children with ability to proceed further than the model indicates.

The dangers of fitting children into 'models of learning outcomes' is highlighted by Barrett (1996) who challenged Swanwick's assumptions that children are incapable of aesthetic thinking and decision-making until the appearance of form and structure in their work at the age of ten years. In contrast, she cites Davies (1992) as observing children of five years of age inventing songs which can be seen as structurally organised in which they intuitively use repetition and sequence. Barrett maintains that children as young as five years are capable of aesthetic decision-making as evidenced in the way they used form and structure in their composing. Barrett found a discrepancy between the skills of decision-making through their compositions with that evidenced in their verbal discourse, suggesting that children's capacity to talk about what they understand is far more limited than the understanding they obviously have as evidenced in their composing work. Barrett does not reject the need to talk about music but warns that the talk may not reveal children's true understanding of their musical thinking.

Dialogue in the classroom

Teachers ask thousands of questions in their classrooms every year and there have been numerous writers and research projects focusing on the verbal exchange between teachers and pupils. These include the ORACLE project (Observational Research and Classroom Learning Evaluation

Project) (Galton et al, 1980, Barnes 1976, Edwards and Mercer 1987, Edwards and Westgate 1994).

Edwards (1990) reported that dialogue with no teacher present encourages pupils to communicate socially and formulate ideas into words whereas when the teacher is present he or she can 'scaffold' ideas to encourage learning. Both these ways of working will be explored in different stages of this research. Barnes' (1976) points to some of the problems experienced in whole class talk with the teacher as the centre of attention asking questions and demanding answers but only accepting what he or she views as correct answers. Philips (1986) in an American Indian Community found that the children communicated well in small groups where they could summon a teacher if required, but in a traditional classroom setting, where they were expected to listen to the teacher and answer on demand, they were unable to participate. Edwards and Mercer (1987) also report classroom talk as teacher centred with the teacher deciding who asks questions, who else talks and it is she who evaluates what is a correct answer. Often a teacher asks so many questions that pupils' questions are given little attention. The teacher re-formulates pupil's ideas instead of allowing the child to clarify ideas. In addition, teacher comments such as 'good' or 'interesting' send out signals that these are correct answers possibly indicating that no other suggestions are needed: "In 'well ordered' classrooms, teachers normally tell pupils when to talk, what to talk about and how well they talked." (Edwards and Westgate, 1994, P113)

Most of these accounts view the teacher as dominating the talk and leaving pupils sitting passively listening with one or two pupils managing to add a short comment in what is essentially a didactic teaching situation. In such classrooms children cannot experience at first hand and so learning is minimal. One of the few studies to encourage 'talk' across arts subjects is that of Ross and his colleagues (Ross et al, 1993). In the context of self assessment, children are encouraged to talk about their art work products with a teacher to enable a deepening of pupils' self understanding in a process of self reflection. The project team found that in one-to-one dialogue, children had a "latent capacity for exploring, explaining and

evaluating the aesthetic experience through talk” (p159). They went on to argue that, “in the right circumstances they respond warmly and socially, using talk to make and explore sense and meaning” (Ross et al, 1993). Though explored in this project as self-assessment, some of the findings relate closely to those found in the one-to-one interviews in this research. Ross gives two short music examples of teacher dialogue with the pupil: one in the process of composing where changes are being suggested (p28-29), and one which reflects on a finished piece of music (p42-45). These are cited in Ross’ work as two interesting pieces of dialogue in the early part of the project and all later case studies involve art, drama or literature students talking about their work.

Reflection on the literature

Appraising will be explored in this project with children in natural classroom settings. By this I mean that the children are being ‘observed’ in lessons which are taking place as they normally would if no research was taking place. Appraising here will be reflective discourse related to children’s own composing work. The talk will normally be that engaged in between the teacher and pupil in the process of their composing rather than summative appraisal. This empirical thesis is influenced by the writings of Burnard (2000a, 2000b) in the way it builds on reflective talk about composing and improvising work, on exploring what it means to improvise and compose, on children’s meaning making through experiential descriptions. It derives from Glover’s work (1990, 2000) the importance of recognising music features and reflecting on this through talk in the classroom. Glover’s idea that children’s responses can develop with age and experience and learning is also an important feature of this project. Whole class discussion is observed (Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Edwards & Westgate 1994) to evaluate the extent to which the teacher does in fact control the dialogue. Children are also observed in dialogue without the teacher present (Edwards 1990) to discover if talk is more spontaneous and constructive. One to one interviews are also audio recorded with pupils whose composing folios are almost complete to discover how productive this type of interview appears to be (Ross et al, 1993).

Green's argument (1999) about the construction of meanings, where connections and relationships contribute to the construction of ideas which children make in order to learn, is an important issue here to consider since the whole point of talk is to help children to construct their understandings and to understand through making connections of musical ideas which were previously unclear or unknown. Swanwick's 'spiral' model of musical understanding (1994) is age-related and developmental. It suggests that children develop in their music making and listening according to certain conventions. The typography presented here from the research data on appraising was also constructed as a result of observing children in music lessons. The typography of appraising differs in that it is not specifically age-related but shows a maturation in the way that appraising skills might develop. Like Swanwick's spiral, the stages of appraising are frequently revisited and represent a cumulative model where, as skills are added, previous ones are still important. Finally, Campbell's narrative approach and presentation of data (1998) has influenced the way that I have described the findings of the empirical material in this research project.

This research is about children reflecting on composing through dialogue. It is about the way they might verbalise their thinking. Talk takes place in the natural setting of the classroom. It is not an artificial situation for the pupils. It does not attempt to show the development of the talk over time but rather the methodology chosen leads the teacher to explore different ways of getting children to talk about their musical creative work, and to discover if one setting encourages richer talk than others. Talk between the teacher and a whole class, between the teacher and individuals and between children working without teacher intervention, in two different contexts are all explored.

CHAPTER 3 : METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research does not ask the question, ‘What is appraising?’ Nor does it set out to explore the *nature* of appraising either in its broadest definition or its narrower definition as set out in this project. As an ethnographic case study, it seeks to explore one school’s experiences of appraising when children talk with the teacher or with each other about their own and others’ music composing work. As an example of practitioner research, with myself as both teacher and researcher in my own classroom, an action research framework will enable me to develop strategies to explore different ways of encouraging children to talk about their creative work. It will enable me to discover if children talk more freely or more constructively with or without the teacher present. It will also enable me to discover the extent to which children need musical vocabulary to explain what they are engaged in and how and when they are able to use it to explain what they are doing.

Theoretical Framework

Action Research was chosen as a methodology for this research project because I wanted to focus on a narrow field within my own teaching practice. I chose to reflect on my own classroom teaching within a music department in the Comprehensive school where I am Head of Music in a small department of two teachers. I chose not to use any procedures that would involve *quantitative research* as I wanted to retain the idea of myself as well as the participants of the research, constructing our own meanings on what is happening. Interpretive methods therefore were chosen. Interpretive approaches to research can take account of feelings and emotions and this is an important aspect of this research (Shipman, 1997, p37). Interpretive research lends itself ideally to the ‘progressive focusing’ necessary in action research. In this type of research, theory is derived from what is observed. It is therefore inductive.

A key feature of action research is that it allows teachers to investigate and reflect on their own practice. As a form of self-reflective enquiry

undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve their understanding of these practices, action research was often engaged in by groups of participants in order to effect collective understanding and change (Kemmis, 1993). This research however focuses on myself both as teacher and researcher. My research therefore follows the example of Stenhouse, an early advocate (1960s and 1970s) of the 'teacher as researcher' movement. Stenhouse's article 'The teacher as researcher' (Stenhouse, 1993) set down guidelines for the teacher to develop his or her "capacity for autonomous professional self-development through systematic self-study, through the study of the work of other teachers and through the testing of ideas by classroom research procedures" (Stenhouse, 1993,p32). Elliott (1991) has continued to develop action research theory and practice into the 1990s. Consistent with his approach, the research focus here has arisen from my awareness of a practical situation that is relatively little understood or defined. The purpose of the research therefore is to clarify issues involved in the practical activity of appraisal in the classroom when appraisal involves talking about practical music making in action. The main feature of action research is its on-going, cyclical nature where changes in teaching strategy are put forward as provisional hypotheses designed to be tested further in the next stage of the research.

Elliott's ideas (1991) further this discussion of praxis in linking the practice to a realisation of values which relate to its ends or objectives. However, though he views this as a fundamental characteristic of action research, he does not see the ends as pre-specified objectives or targets but rather as ones which are continually defined and refined in the process of reflection on the practice itself: "The reflection is about choosing a course of action in a particular set of circumstances, to realize one's values" (Elliott, 1991, p51). Elliott views such reflection as a philosophical critique of the value *interpretations embedded in practice with the aim of improving this practice*. It can modify the teacher's understandings and conceptions of what is useful data about practice and so this philosophical reflection is an essential feature of action research: "Reflection is an active process of self-scrutiny and self-challenge" (Somekh, 1995).

Action research focuses on the rigorous examination of a single situation in order to improve practice. One particular feature of action research is that the change of action that is decided upon will be unique to each situation. The changes in teaching strategies during the course of the research process are those which appear appropriate for this particular context. These strategies to encourage talk in children about their work are appropriate for this particular music department in this particular school. The physical spaces where children engage in music tasks as well as the participants and the relationships engaged in by these children and teachers are unique to this situation and time. One purpose of the project is to reflect on and explore the ways in which children talk about their composing. As each different strategy leads to new groupings and organisations of learning and as each strategy is analysed, only then will it be evident what the next course of action might be in revealing new strategies for improvements in the contexts for children to talk when creating music.

Action research is designed to improve practice through reflection. For teachers it represents a form of professional development, curriculum development, evaluation as well as a form of research. Theory is generated to illuminate practical aspects of the findings but in action research theoretical understanding has a subordinate role to the empirical research and to the project as a whole. Change or innovation is sought as a precondition of the research (Elliott, 1991). Curriculum ideas are tested through action, as the continually developing product of invention and reflection (Stenhouse, in Hammersley, 1993).

In summary then, case study of an action research project is one of reflection on the practitioners' own practice in the classroom. The researcher here is the teacher. This research method allows for professional reflection and hence the improvement of teaching and learning. Its overriding feature is to improve practice and to inform professional judgement.

Problems for the teacher-researcher

Elliott (1991) argues that worthwhile change is unlikely to take effect when teachers reflect in isolation. He places the solitary reflective teacher as

polar opposite to the collaborative reflective practitioner group. He describes the solitary teacher as blind to reflection about how to change. The 'solitary teacher' here is one who does not seek to change curriculum ideas through research. In this project I am acting as a solitary action researcher who may not have the advantages of a collaborative research group, but I am reflecting in collaboration with the pupils and in part with my colleague in cycle 1 of the project. I am reflecting on paper and receiving feedback from those who read what I have written. I am 'collaborating' with others and with texts, on the subject chosen as well as on methodological issues. This is not equivalent to the solitary teacher who is blind to reflection. However, there are disadvantages for the action researcher who works alone in his or her school.

Collaborating in research with a colleague and to some degree with your own students raises many ethical issues. The dilemma of not wishing to challenge a colleague's professional expertise sometimes prevents the researcher from being totally open about the outcomes of the research observation. This also inhibits the extent to which triangulation might be employed to verify or challenge assumptions made by the researcher in writing up the research findings. In the same way, in working with children, certain ethical considerations have to be applied. In my research, all children to be observed were given an explanation as to why they were being video or audio recorded and all were asked the question if they minded being observed in this way. In observing my colleague's lesson and in working with students whose group work is being video recorded, in each case the lesson was followed up by an interview with the participants. This included an interview with my colleague. Having evidence of different vantage points on the lesson under discussion strengthens the validity of the research. My colleague, who I will refer to as Lyn, was aware of the overall subject of my research but she herself said in her interview with me that she felt confused at that time about what appraising in the classroom really involved. Lyn therefore was aware that I wanted to observe dialogue taking place within the lesson which related to compositions being undertaken. As a result, Lyn dominated the talk in the lesson and from my observation, I felt that the pupils had not done very much discussion work of this kind before. In the lesson Lyn discussed the final products of their composing work after they

had been audio recorded. She then criticised elements of their work in the presence of the whole class, providing them with no opportunity to change or improve their work. The interview following the lesson between Lyn and myself did not attempt to discuss the differences between appraising the product and the process. The focus was on understanding what appraising is and on allowing Lyn to discuss her own feelings about the lesson in an unstructured interview. This interview failed to provide useful triangulation. The interviews with the groups of pupils were more useful, highlighting some of their feeling about problems encountered between group members, particularly in Group A, Cycle 2, where group friction prevented some group members from feeling that they were making adequate progress. Overall however, triangulation strategies did not strengthen the validity of the research to any great extent.

Being a solitary researcher in my own school does introduce certain ethical problems and moral dilemmas. Hitchcock and Hughes, (1995) raise some of these issues: "What lengths can research go to in investigating its subjects? What rights do the subjects of a piece of research have? How can trust be established or confidentiality and anonymity be guaranteed?" (p45). In the case of my relationship with my colleague Lyn, I was unable to feed back to her the report of my findings as there were implicit and explicit criticisms there of the way that she conducted the lesson. I also chose at that point not to observe any more of her lessons. If I had felt confident at this point to collaborate with her on developing this aspect of our work within the department, then the process and design of the research might have been different.

As an 'insider' in the research site and as a participant observer, I have certain advantages, but some disadvantages impact on the research findings. The advantages include ease of access to the research setting, a rapport is already established between myself and those being observed so the research is more naturalistic. In some cases, only the presence of the tape recorder intrudes into what would be a 'normal' school experience. The one-to-one interviews are a good example of this. In addition, as an 'insider', I am able to change direction in my research strategies to meet the needs of the 'new action' required by the new teaching strategies envisaged for each

new cycle. There is no re-negotiation required with those involved. Timings also can be more convenient to the researcher, rather than having to negotiate times to suit teachers and the researcher. Findings will be interpreted in the light of background information on pupils observed and based on the inside knowledge which the researcher possesses as a teacher in the school. Hammersley (1993) suggests that teachers have access to their own intentions and motives, thoughts and feelings, in a way that an observer does not, and so the teacher/researcher has a deeper understanding of their own behaviour in a way that an outsider could never have. As a reflective account this results in a more meaningful deeply-felt evaluation of events but there are also problems with this self-examination.

It is necessary to consider the ways in which one's professional role within an organization can undermine the validity of the research. In my interview with Lyn in Cycle 1, she probably viewed me as a teacher colleague rather than as a researcher. As a colleague I did not want to make her feel threatened. She was allowing me to observe her lesson, video it and then to interview her. I made notes but chose not to audio record the interview. I also chose not to investigate too far issues which might have appeared confrontational. I encouraged her to talk about her understanding of appraising but I did not probe further. As an 'outsider', I might have been less sensitive. In the same way my interviews with groups of pupils in Cycle 2 revealed their obvious awareness of the teacher-pupil relationship. They may even have criticised what they had been set to do in the lesson by the teacher if talking to an 'outsider'. It is apparent then that by having a closer relationship with the participants of the research, the information supplied by participants can be very different to that supplied to outside researchers.

Hammersley (1993) identifies a number of the disadvantages for teacher researchers as 'insiders'. "People can deceive themselves about their intentions, motive, etc. Indeed, they may often have an interest in such self-deception where an outsider has less reason to prefer one account over another" (Hammersley, 1993, p218). The dilemma here of the way the researcher views her colleague Lyn's lesson is a viewpoint which is imposed on the research. As the researcher, I am critical of her behavioural control and of the way Lyn criticises pupil's work without giving them an

opportunity to improve. Both Ross et al. (1993) and Mellor (1999) treat the appraising of pupils' work in a similar manner to Lyn's approach, appraising the product rather than the process. Mellor, it has been reported, asked pupils to give a comment and a mark out of 10 in appraising each others' work. My view of appraising, as process talk, is imposed not only onto the research findings but also onto the way interviews are judged and in what information is withheld from the report.

Hammersley (1993) also highlights the problem of the limitations that an 'insider' might experience in the way other people provide information. An outsider may be able to tap into a wider range of information sources and their understanding of the perspectives of other people involved in the context may be different and less distorted. This problem has already been highlighted in the researcher's relationship with her colleague and with her pupils who regard her as 'the teacher' and so provide the answers they think she will expect to hear.

Despite these problems, the fundamental aim of this action research is to improve practice (Elliott, 1991, p48). This does not excuse the problems highlighted here, nor does it remove them, but it emphasises the fact that this research is principally the researcher's own view of the actions that are taking place. The research is a construction, gradually happening over a period of time. Those participating are continually making sense of what is happening and constructing their own perceptions and views of how they interpret events. Those involved are continually attributing meanings or making indications to each other which in turn affects the way interpretations are made in the research. How these interpretations are made also depends on the way that they impact on the contexts. The researcher's own view of his or her role in school, experiences undergone with participants in the past and present, and the way the researcher views those studied all influence the way the research is conducted. In turn, the way Lyn views her colleague (the researcher) will affect the way she answers questions when interviewed. For example, her perceptions of what was required led her to introduce much more dialogue into her lesson than normal, believing this is what was required of her. This was the way she made sense of this situation.

A constructivist perspective focuses on the way children engage with and interpret what they are doing. The children's assumptions should lead the changes in learning strategy dictated by the findings in the action research process. An interesting point is made by Kemmis, who says:

“The crucial pointis that only the practitioner can have access to the perspective and commitments that inform a particular action as praxis.....The dialectic of action and understanding is a uniquely personal process of rational reconstruction and construction.”

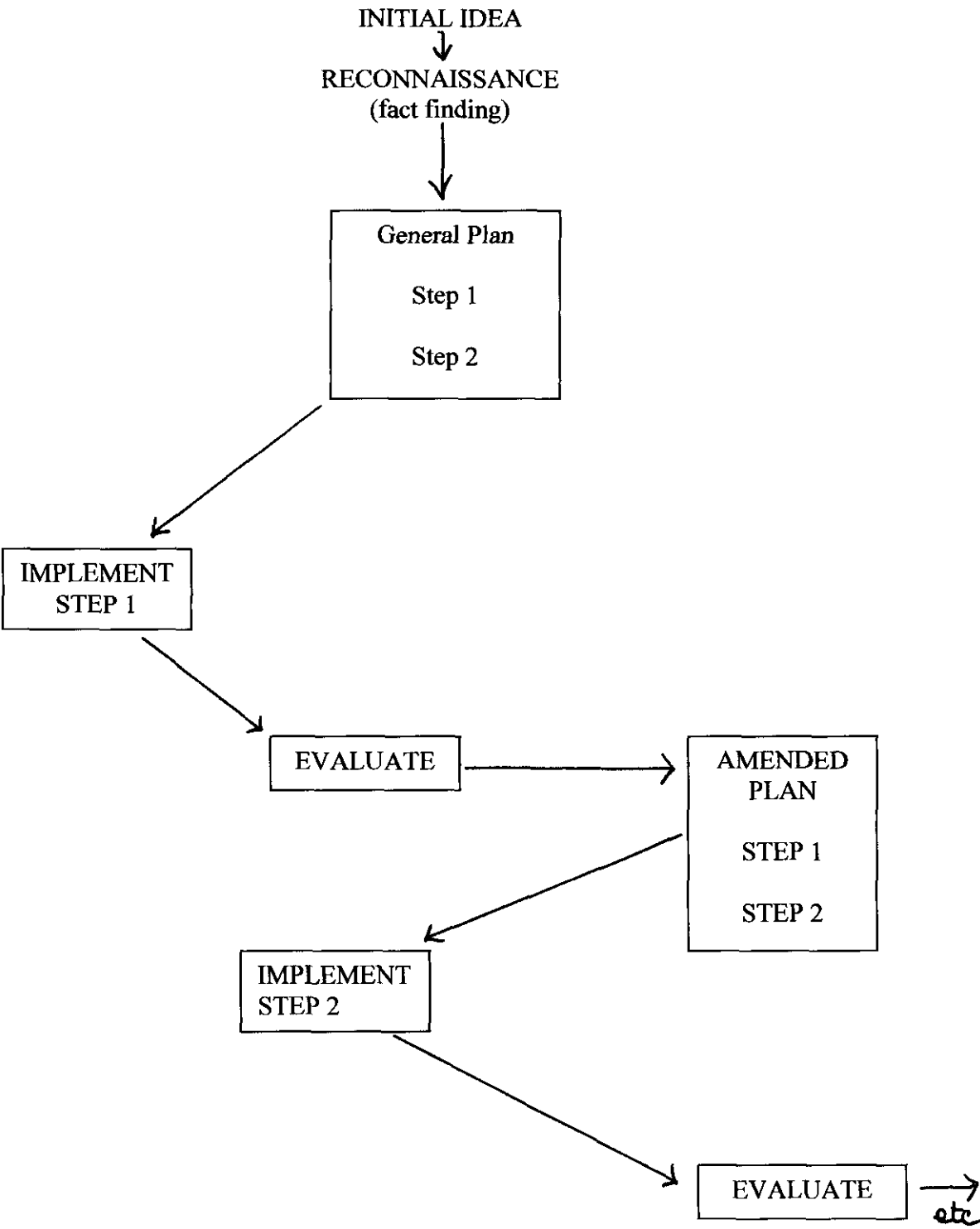
(Kemmis,1993,p183)

Hammersley (1993, p217) makes a similar point, that the knowledge that the researcher puts forward in the research is in itself a construction. This requires an element of reflexivity, that is self-conscious reflection on my own practices and the practice of others participating in the research in order to help me to find new teaching and learning strategies which will provide richer outcomes for those taking part. This is the methodological aim of this study.

The Research Strategy

Action research was a term first used by social psychologist, Kurt Lewin (Elliott, 1991). Lewin's model involved a spiral of cycles. [See Lewin's model on the next page].

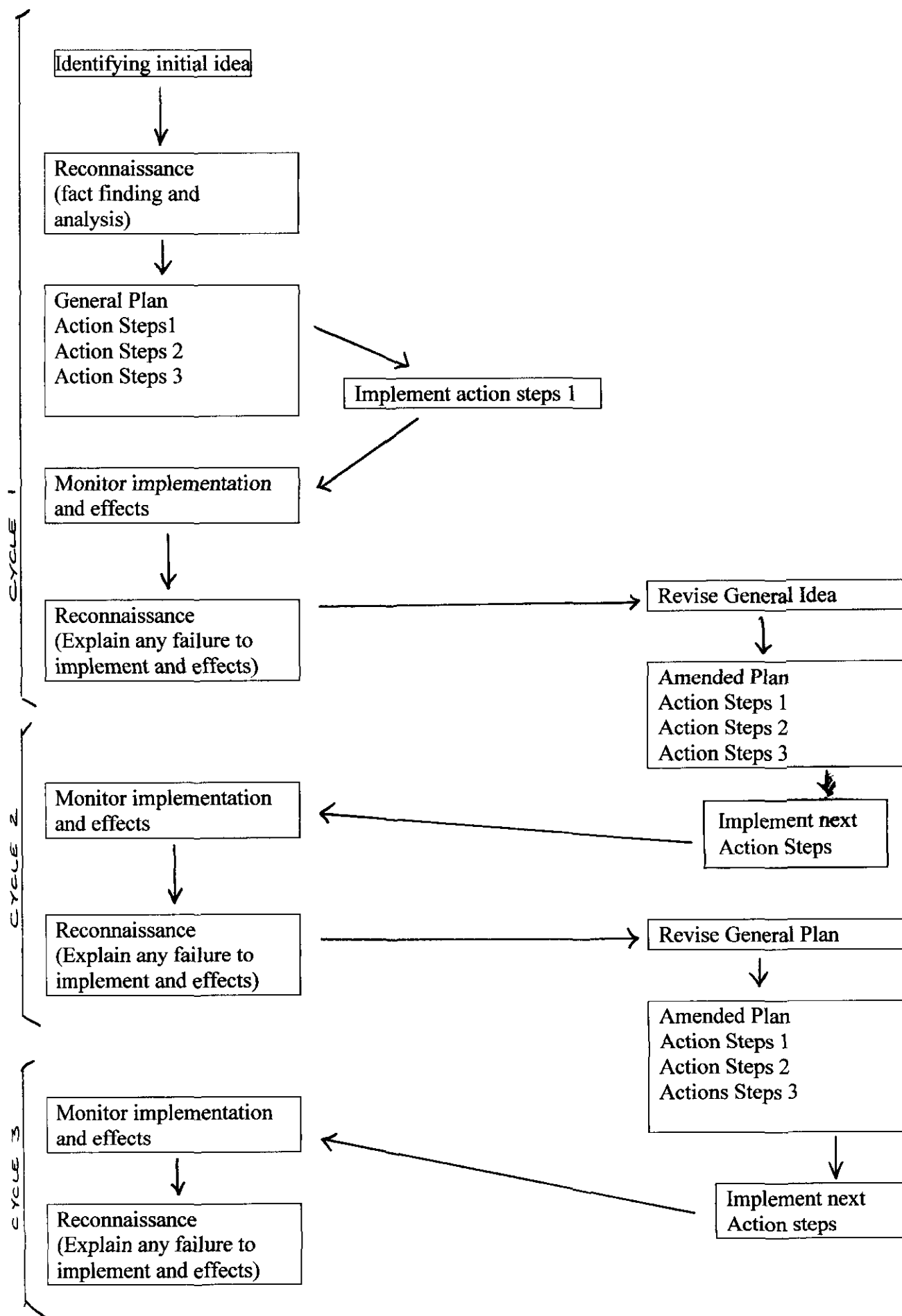
Fig 3.1 Lewin's model of action research (Elliott, 1991, p70)



Elliott criticised this model because he believed that it might be assumed by the researcher that the general idea could be fixed in advance and that the implementation could be seen to be straightforward. Elliottt argued that in action research the general idea should be allowed to shift, that the reconnaissance should involve analysis as well as fact finding and should recur in each cycle or spiral. Elliott also suggested that the implementation of an action step should be monitored fully before the effects are analysed. In other words, Elliott saw Lewin's model as too simplistic of an ever changing evaluative process.

Elliott (1991) revised the model to clarify that the initial or general idea could shift in emphasis during the research, that the reconnaissance or initial fact finding stage should also involve analysis and could re-occur in each spiral to prepare for the next cycle of activities. Each cycle leads from the findings of the initial reconnaissance or from the reflection and findings of the last cycle. Action or activity therefore follows on from a consideration of the outcomes of the previous cycle. Theory is generated from practice and it is validated through practice. The research is led by the teaching strategies rather than by new research strategies. When one situation fails to produce the kind of results desired, then a new strategy of teaching and learning is constructed and this becomes a new spiral to be tested out and analysed [See figure 3.2 on the next page].

Fig. 3.2 Elliott's revised version of Lewin's model of action research



The general idea should be something that impinges on one's field of action and be something that needs to be changed or improved. The action research should address the extent to which one is able to change or improve the situation rather than seek to solve a problem or find an answer. In this research the general idea is explored in the Introduction, Chapter 1. The reconnaissance, here part of Cycle 1, then describes and asks questions and analyses the problem of the situation. The *general plan of action* will outline the strategies for change which are implemented in action steps. The action steps determine the methods by which the action is researched in the form of changed teaching strategies. These are implemented by observation, analysis and reflection in the case of the research here. This results in further changes in teaching strategies to enable further changes to be explored. Cycle 1 is then concluded with a revised general plan before Cycle 2 begins the process again [see figure 3.3 on the next page for details of how Elliott's model is translated into my research].

Fig 3.3 The Action Research Model employed in this study¹

<u>Cycle</u>	<u>Action Research Model - Elliott</u>	<u>Research Model this research</u>
CYCLE 1	Identifying the Initial Idea	Introduction – Chapter 1
	Reconnaissance – fact finding and analysis.	Chapter 4 – Cycle 1 Exploring appraising in whole class contexts. 1. Observation of teacher/ researcher’s lesson. 2. Observation of colleague’s lesson in same school.
	Analysis and Hypothesis for Cycle 2.	Reflection on the outcomes of Cycle 1.
CYCLE 2	Action Step 1 Action Step 2 Action Step 3	Chapter 5 New teaching strategy: small group talk. 1. Small groups observed 2. Interviews after small group observation One-to-one interviews with year 11 pupils.
	Implementation of action steps 1,2, and 3.	Findings from above observations and interviews.
	Reconnaissance to explain any failure, and effect.	Reflection on findings of Cycle 2
	Revised General Plan	New teaching strategies for Cycle 3.
CYCLE 3	Amended Plan Action step 1	Chapter 6 New teaching strategy: small groups appraising each others’ work without teacher present.

¹ Elliott’s version of Lewin’s model of Action Research (Elliott, 1991, p71), revised here to incorporate present research issues.

The fieldwork of this research is divided into stages of progressive refocussing. Cycle 1 forms the initial identification of the extent of the problems involved in talking with children about their work in what was at that time, seen to be the normal whole-class approach to appraising creative work. Two whole lessons are observed in this cycle with two different teachers. The findings suggested that teacher dominated talk did not yield the best results for the pupils in developing their critical skills of listening through talk. An unstructured interview between the teacher-researcher and the observed colleague took place after the second lesson in order to seek the perceptions of the teacher of the lesson on what was taking place. Methodologically, Chapter 4, Cycle 1 is a Reconnaissance where the problems of classroom appraising are observed, described and analysed.

In Cycle 2, children were encouraged to spend more time together talking about their work without the teacher present in the discussion. Often this talk was integrated into the evolving process of the composing rather than as a reflection on what they were producing. However, I (as the teacher) also interviewed members of these groups after the lesson to reflect together on the lessons. These interviews could be seen to act as evidence of the triangulation of data. Spiral one also involved older pupils being interviewed on an individual basis by the teacher about their work products at the end of their GCSE music course. A large amount of data was analysed in Cycle 2 and the findings revealed different types of appraising with suggestions that there might be hierarchical, cumulative development in the way children mature in their talk about composing work. That is, new skills are added to those already understood by the child. The typology designed from the findings does not imply age-related stages but it does imply that there is a progressive build up of skills through a sequence of developmental stages.

These findings led to a further shift in teaching strategies for Cycle 3. Because the teacher needed to discover if younger children were capable of 'higher' levels of appraising, in Cycle 3, groups of pupils were encouraged to talk together about their work. Two task groups demonstrated their composition work to each other and then asked questions about the music

they had heard. These findings demonstrated that younger pupils were capable of higher levels of appraising if given the right conditions and tasks to complete. These findings led me (the researcher) to be able to make some overall analyses about the ways teachers might provide opportunities for children to develop their appraising skills in their day-to-day music making lessons in the classroom.

Data collection methods

As outlined in the last section, the data collection methods included observations and interviews. The use of video for recording observations allowed the researcher to re-examine material. It was also useful to be able to examine body language when talk became inaudible and when it is not always clear from the audio tape who is talking. Using the video camera was especially helpful when the researcher was also acting as the teacher. Video recording was also used when the teacher acted as observer to another colleague and when the children were working in groups away from teacher direct supervision. The fly-on-the-wall approach was particularly useful in small group observation and was always done with pupils' full awareness and permission.

The use of the video camera can pose problems however, despite all the advantages "what we see is always filtered by our own experience, by our background, and our position in the world." (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995, p310) A video recording is not a direct record of 'what happened'. The researcher in analysing the data will 'make meanings' from what she sees through the eye of the camera and from what she remembers from the lesson. The camera will only see a fraction of what is going on in the room. In the teacher's own whole class lesson in Cycle 1, the teacher was aware that some boys were engaging in distracting behaviour near the back of the room but chose not to disrupt the whole lesson to investigate. The camera which was placed at the back of the room revealed the extent of what was happening when, in the video, I viewed the classroom from a totally different angle. A further problem with video recording observations is that the video camera was paused at intervals in the early whole class lessons to allow the technician to move to video a small group working together. In

total only 34 minutes of the 70 minute lesson was video recorded which would suggest a process of selective sampling.

In Cycle 1, a technician agreed to video record my lesson. In Cycles 2 and 3, the video camera was placed on a tripod in the corner of the room and here it was left running throughout the lesson. Interviews with the pupils were audio recorded as were the one-to-one interviews with older students. The poor quality of the audio recordings made transcription problematic. The video recordings were first copied onto audio tape for the purpose of transcription. The video was then watched to clarify some verbal comments and also to make notes on what was happening visually.

A number of ethical issues arose from using video and audio recording equipment with children. There is the consideration of whether one should listen-in to pupils' interactions between themselves even when consent has been given. A promise was made to the pupils that no one else would watch or listen to the recordings made. The children were aware of the presence of the camera and in Group A, comments were made about 'our friend' and the 'fly-on-the-wall'. The presence of this equipment will inevitably affect those being observed. What they say and how they act will change because they know that their teacher will watch the resulting video.

The group interviews contained in the research are unstructured. They follow lesson observations and they accompany some limited viewing of the lesson video. Questions therefore tend to focus on getting the pupils to talk about what they perceived they were doing. Getting them to reflect on their own processes is one outcome of these sessions. These interviews seek to provide some form of triangulation, for seeing the situation from different angles. They attempt to view the lesson from the pupil's perspective. One problem here is that the teacher is in a position of authority and so it is clear in some of the conversations that the teacher gets from the pupils the answers that she might expect. The one-to-one interviews with year 11 students are evaluation exercises on their almost completed composition folios. They are unstructured but all contain a common theme of inquiring, "what did you mean.....?" or, "why did you...?" or, "did you like.....".

Problems of sampling

One issue of selective sampling arising from only portions of the lesson being video recorded has already been suggested. When the teacher is also the researcher, sampling problems are much more likely to arise. In this research the teacher selected the groups to be video recorded in Cycle 2. Most of the groups were the usual friendship groups adopted for lessons but those observed in Cycles two and three were also single sex groupings. Inevitably, pupils chosen to work alone in adjacent rooms in any music lesson will be those who can be trusted by the teacher to work hard and behave. This creates its own bias. All those observed were articulate and appear to be above average in musical ability and intelligence. All these factors will affect the outcomes of the research. As the teacher/researcher chooses the groups, inevitably groups are likely to be selected who will be good demonstrations of the issue under review. Many of those observed play musical instruments. More girls than boys are observed. Most groups, though not all, are single sex friendship groups. In the reality of the school setting it is not always possible to achieve “intentional systematic and theoretically guided sampling” (Hammersley, 1984, p51). Hammersley reports that he made notes on conversations held between classrooms and the staffroom and because of the nature of many of his conversations, his sampling was, “unintentional and unprincipled”. (p52) Access to classes is one of the first problems for systematic sampling. In Cycle 1, the lesson with myself as class teacher was chosen because the video technician was able to be present at that time and it was a fairly sudden decision to go ahead with the lesson observation. For the lesson with my colleague in the department, there were only two periods in the week when she taught and I was free to observe. She chose the class to be observed from these. The reflective nature of this research on the teacher’s own practice allow some flexibility in the sampling and makes the situation to be observed more naturalistic.

The initial idea then has been identified in general terms in Chapter 1: the need to explore appraising as talk about music composing in the Secondary School classroom. I have suggested that appraising will be observed in different contexts within music lessons. The first context is discussion

between the teacher and pupils in the class about composing work which is being demonstrated to the whole class as an interim process prior to completion. Cycle 1, the Reconnaissance recorded in chapter 5, describes this observation of two whole class lessons.

CHAPTER 4 : CYCLE 1 – RECONNAISSANCE

Cycle 1 examined the nature of appraising when children talk about their work in the context of whole class discussion and enabled evaluation of the role and purpose of the talk by both teachers and pupils. This chapter is one of fact finding and analysis and forms the reconnaissance in the action research framework of the whole research thesis.

The Context

The General Plan for this first cycle is to observe two whole class lessons where appraising of music composing is taking place in what is generally regarded as a widely accepted method for talk about work in progress. The analysis following the observation of these two lessons will enable me to evaluate the effectiveness of appraising in this way.

Lesson 1 - My lesson exploring Indian raga and drones

The lesson took place directly after lunch with a mixed ability year 8 class, (aged 12 to 13 years). The classroom is spacious and the children begin the lesson sitting round tables to watch a short video explaining what a sitar is and how ragas are used to create Indian music. After some discussion recalling some of the ideas given in the video, pupils move to work in groups of their own choosing to fit together a repetitive drone, a tala or repetitive rhythm and an improvised melody using a given raga scale and to shape it into a short piece of music. The class consists of fifteen girls and ten boys. Nine girls and two boys have musical instrument lessons. This is a high proportion of pupils who have some interest in musical activities. Two boys in the class have specific behavioural problems. Richard was moved into this class at the beginning of year 8 because of these problems but he enjoys music and is very vocal in discussion lessons. Another boy is on the special needs register and is being monitored by the educational psychologist for a condition which prevents his concentration on any task. The class has some knowledge already about Indian drones and they have improvised on keyboards using their own raga scales. The concepts required for the practical task will therefore already be understood by some pupils

more fully than others. None of this information has been acquired through written work but through practical music making together with discussion. For this task pupils will need to understand that the drone repeats, the improvisation can alter each time it is performed and that the repeated drum pattern (a simple tala) should not imitate any other rhythms in the piece. One of the purposes of appraising here is to assess pupils' understanding of these elements and to help them to correct any misunderstandings as their work progresses. The room is equipped with classroom tuned and untuned percussion instruments and pupils are encouraged to use their own instruments.

Lesson 2 - My colleague's lesson on Words and Rhythms

This lesson with a year 7 class (aged 11 to 12 years) took place in the same large classroom. On the day observed there are thirteen girls and 11 boys present. Only one is identified as learning a musical instrument (cello) in this class. As this is a first year class, it is usual to expect motivation to be high even though the 'musical' composition of the class is very different from the year 8 class. Both classes it is interesting to note have more girls than boys. In this lesson pupils are exploring rhythms in practical ways using a map of the London Underground. They are selecting 'names' of stations to fit to rhythm patterns and they are using their selected rhythm names to compose a 16 bar rhythmic piece which they will chant in various ways with members of their group (Paynter, 1989).

Findings from cycle 1: the reconnaissance – Teacher comments and responses

The findings from this research revealed that pupils rarely initiated conversation and responses to the teachers' questioning could be categorised into a number of types of answers. The teacher dialogue is dominant and again can be categorised into a number of types of answers to pupils. In lesson 1, teacher responses were mainly positive with approximately 12 acceptances of the learner's statement and 7 as celebration of the learner's attempt. 11 responses were questions to elicit further pupil response. In lesson 2, a further category was found to be necessary, that of repeating a pupil's response. This proved to be the most common response (12) with 10 celebrating learner's work, and 8 further questioning the pupils to elicit

another response. Again responses were largely positive with 13 either 'accepting' or 'celebrating'.

Fig. 4.1: Evidence of teacher responses in whole class appraising

Teacher responses	Lesson 1	Lesson 2
Acceptance of learner's Statement.	12	3
Celebration of learner's attempt to speak.	7	10
Questions to elicit further pupil responses	11	8
Repetition of pupil response.	0	12

Further analysis of the findings from these two lessons revealed finer distinctions in the nature of teacher and pupil responses and questioning. .

Celebration

In analysing the narrative of my own lesson, I have noticed that I do not tend to give praise immediately after hearing a composition performed. Rather, I invite comments first from other pupils in the class who are also listening to these performances. I appear to praise pupils during the subsequent dialogue in the responses to pupils' own comments. This is aptly illustrated in the following conversation about Emma and Sarah's work. Emma and Sarah are both clarinettists. They are highly motivated in music lessons and they achieve good results. Because they are working as a pair at this stage of the lesson, they are concentrating on the drone and raga improvisation and leaving out the tala rhythm.

Dialogue 4.1

Emma and Sarah demonstrate their piece :

Teacher Right , hands up for any comments. Yes?

Laura It was a good idea for Sarah to have a rest.

Teacher Yes, well done.

Gemma they made the tune sound quite easy.

Teacher Very good.

Daniel erm.....the last note finished on a high one, it sort of sounded like it wasn't finished.

Teacher Right.

Daniel *It sort of sounded like it needed to carry on upwards.*

Teacher Alright, so that's a thought, you must decide whether you agree or not.

Emma (She mutters a comment – inaudible)

Teacher What was that, Emma?

Emma (defensively) We didn't have any high notes.

Teacher Oh, alright, they were limited by the notes they had on the instrument. What about the drone?....hang on a minute Richard, what about the drone? How many notes were there in the drone?....different notes, I know there were four, but how many *different* notes were there in the drone? Yes?

Amy Three.

Teacher Yes, there were three different notes, so you made a very *interesting drone up of your own which was different from the usual pattern.* Richard?

Richard They played very well because they played like the notes were exactly in time to it.

Teacher It was, it was very well in time.

It is not clear whether my 'well done' response to Laura's comment here is directed at Laura for her comment or to the performers. I think the former and this is repeated after Gemma's comment....'Very good?'. In response to Richard's comment at the end, I reiterate his comment that it was 'very well in time'. I tried to extract comments from the pupils about the drone so that I could praise Emma and Sarah for being original in their ideas. It is noticeable from this dialogue that the atmosphere created is one of celebration of what the pupils are doing. As the teacher I appear to want the pupils to suggest ideas but I ask questions to direct the comments towards certain features. If I don't entirely agree or don't want to appear critical, I leave the comment open-ended. An example of this is in reply to Daniel, "so that's a thought. You must decide whether you agree or not."

In lesson 2, my colleague approaches celebratory comments in a totally different way. As she records each demonstration, she makes a comment such as, "right, thank you very much" or "good, an interesting one there."

She then plays back the recordings so that they can talk about them. One difference in the approach here is that in my lesson, some of the comments made were aimed at improving the work because the work was in its early stages. In lesson 2 here, my colleague is recording them at the end of a project so they are apparently summative comments.

Dialogue 4.2

After listening to a recorded example:

Teacher Any comments?

Pupil It was good.

Teacher I thought it was good too. Any more particular comments about it, what was good about it? What was interesting? Yes?

Pupil When they were at first hissing, it was louder than the chanting.

Teacher Yes that's a quite good point. What about the hissing itself, was that a good idea?

(Teacher waits for comments)

I had this idea that it was the hissing of the train doors – that's a brilliant idea. (pupils glance at each other, there is a lot of muttering and classroom noise.)

Any other comments from anybody else? (lots of chat and noise)

What about some good things about it? You're all too keen to pick people apart. What was good about it?

Pupil All talk together....(inaudible)

Teacher(inaudible).Excuse me.....

Well it was all in the same rhythm, it was well organised and it worked really well so congratulations. Among the best.

The teacher's comments here are in praise of the work. She finds it difficult to get this class to evaluate the composition. She tends to ask broader questions such as, "what was good about it?" instead of picking out specific features for comment but the pupils do not seem to be forthcoming with their comments. Her praise of the work appears genuine and she also leaves her evaluation until the end and picks out the reasons why she thinks it is a

successful piece, “.....all in the same rhythm...well organisedcongratulations.”

Teacher praise in composing lessons is essential provided it is meaningful. Pupils are looking for genuine praise and they know then it is justified. When pupils are performing their composing work to the class it is a threatening situation. They often make mistakes. The teacher’s empathy and understanding of the situation is important and praise will be valued if it is seen to be genuinely given and earned. My celebration comments tend to focus on the appraising dialogue as well as on the composition performance. Many times the ‘well done’ comments appear to be directed at the verbal comment of the pupil so that pupils are being praised for their own appraisals. In lesson 2, it is likely that as well as being younger pupils, they have had less opportunities to evaluate each others’ performances. Teacher praise here is directed towards the performances only. In lesson 1, the teacher does not give empty praise, she qualifies celebratory comments with reasons. She tries to get the pupils to initiate the verbal ideas which she then praises them for.

Accepting

Teacher responses in the classroom conversations are often accepting of what pupils say. Confirmation that what a pupil says is valid is common in the dialogues. When teachers respond to pupils’ answers they often repeat the pupil’s words. This is confirmation of acceptance of the pupil’s statement. It also allows the class to hear what has been said. It is a coping strategy to keep the lesson moving along. When discussing drones in Indian music:

Seb It’s a repeated tune

Teacher It’s a repeated tune that goes on in the background, yes.

When confirming a good performance :

Richard Quite good

Teacher I thought it was very good.

Here the teacher confirms Richard's opinion but also praises the performer/composer. Often the teacher will say, 'That's right' or sometimes just, 'right' in confirmation of what the pupils has said.

The majority of responses in the two lessons were of 'acceptance' of what pupils said. Positive feedback by the teacher is important in order to encourage further progress to be made and to encourage pupils to talk further about the work. Pupils need to feel that their comments will be valued. The social pressures in whole class performance and talking together is a difficult process for many pupil. They need to be certain that the teacher will not ridicule anything they say. The climate of the classroom needs to be completely non-threatening. Positive 'acceptance' teacher comments in response to pupil talk are important to create this climate of trust.

Development

Teachers like to ask questions - it is what they do well in the classroom. Teachers need to be able to take up what a pupil says and probe further to discover whether an idea or concept is really understood or to just develop an idea further. In the following dialogue in my own lesson, I am attempting to elaborate on terminology or ideas used by pupils. I am using the opportunity to teach within the confines of what arises in the conversation.

Dialogue 4.3

Teacher Yes, she was improvising in quite a difficult way, she was making quick beats. What does Danny mean by that or what do you mean by that, Danny?

Danny Quavers.

Teacher Yes, she was making quavers, she was making quicker rhythms as well as the ones that were in time with the drone. Who was playing the

drone? Where was the drone?

Yes?

Rachel erm.....(inaudible)

Teacher The flute was playing the drone. What about the drum part, what did you think about it?

Richard Quite good.

Teacher That's fine Richard, but anybody else, any comments? Do you think it sounded effective, you know, in terms of what we heard when we watched the video of Indian music?

Richard It sounded like.. the same as what we heard on the video. It went together well with what they were playing.

Teacher It did. Well done Richard, I think it went very well and it sounded a nice sort of dull tabla sound really.

Sometimes dialogue is used by the teacher to revise or clarify that the class understand the terminology and concepts being explored in the lesson. In the following dialogue in my own lesson I am 'testing' the pupils' understandings.

Dialogue 4.4

We've been doing some work on Indian music and you'll see some words we've been using about Indian music that you've learnt. Can you just tell me anything...anything that you've learnt?

[pause]

Anything at all.....Laura?

Laura Raga is a scale that's er played on a sitar and its er6 notes. [noise, someone prompts her] its 5 to 7 notes.

Teacher It could be more but we, when we did it next door [referring to a keyboard lesson] we used 5

Teacher points to white board on which is written;

DRONE d e e e

RAGA b d e g a

TALA - a repeating pattern

Teacher raises hand to still any other muttering as she listens

to Laura.

to 7 notes, good. It's a set of notes, isn't it? a scale of notes, good.....and its...and what?... do you remember how many there are in Indian music? [referring to ragas]

Laura Oh, erm, what ...just over 300?

Teacher yeah, there's over 300.

Seb It is a repeated tune

Teacher It's a repeated tune.....

..its a repeated tune that goes on in the

background, yes.[referring to drone]

Steven?

Steven The raga sets the mood for what... [difficult to hear]

Teacher Yes, yes, ragas have moods

Laura The notes in the raga are used to make up the improvised.....

Teacher that's right. Music in India isn't written down, is it?...Its improvised.

In dialogue 4.3, I am questioning the pupils in an orderly classroom discussion. Pupil to pupil talk is not encouraged. I elaborate pupil answers. Richard's response, 'quavers' is picked up by me and confirmed, ('yes, she was making quavers') and then elaborated and developed, ('...she was making quicker rhythms'). It is noticeable that in both conversations I dominate the talk. Some pupils are actively making comments but the vast majority of pupils are silently listening. Answers by the pupils tend to be short. 'Quavers', 'quite good', 'improvising quick beats'. As the teacher, I am questioning to discover whether pupils have understood. In some ways my comments are manipulative (see fig 4.2). There is a strong suggestion here that the teacher is manipulating the conversation to ensure that she gets the answers that she expects. Danny responds in the first conversation using musical terminology. The children seem to know that I want them to use this terminology in their responses. In dialogue 4.4, there is revision of work. Here my questioning seeks to test understanding. The pupils are providing correct factual answers but I am using the opportunity to reinforce these terms and ideas. In the middle the dialogue shifted from talk about

ragas to drones and it is not clear if the pupil, Seb, was confused over the use of these terms or not. Later, Seb demonstrated in his music that he does not understand that a raga improvisation does not repeat over and over, so it is likely that here in this conversation there *is* a confusion that is not picked up adequately by me. Responses which require further development from the pupil overlap with responses which are used to improve understanding and which form part of a teacher's formative assessing.

Although development responses by teachers can at their most effective use pupils' responses to probe further or to develop understanding of an idea or of musical terminology or concepts, they can also simply be a test of factual knowledge and understanding.

Improvement/assessment responses

There is an overlap of ideas between 'development' and 'assessment' responses. One of the purposes of appraising each others' work in conjunction with performing compositions to each other, is to develop pupils' skills in talking about their work. At the same time it provides the teacher with valuable feedback about children's capabilities. It can be seen as contributing to formative assessment. In these whole class lessons however, many pupils did not speak at all in the class discussions. Mercer (1992, p30) writes that teachers use talk for the purpose of assessing children's learning by talking to them about their work. He suggests that most of the questions that teachers ask serve the purpose of monitoring children's knowledge and understanding. The examples cited in the 'development' responses all fit this category.

These findings point clearly to the need for new research strategies in Cycle 2 of this study when the focus of the empirical research will shift to group 'talk', to individual or group discussions with a teacher present, and to more in-depth analyses of work in progress. Difficulty in oral articulation is one of the problems of whole class discussion. Some pupils never respond aloud and some who do, feel unable to give extended speeches. For the teacher it is a question of maintaining a balance and control of the lesson so that it keeps moving along. Pupils need to feel freer to express themselves without

having to speak in front of the whole class and the teacher when they are only possibly trying out ideas aloud themselves. Whole class lessons, where children perform their work and discuss it is useful to the teacher however to inform them about pupil's capabilities, to help children compare their work with others, and to learn from listening to others' musical work. The information, especially of musical terminology that the teacher is able to impart during these demonstrations and discussions is another advantage of whole class lessons. While getting pupils to make their comments on their peers' musical compositions, the teacher is constantly adding teaching points to help pupil's understandings.

Criterion-related responses

It may be apparent that the pupils in my observed lesson were not new to talking about their work. It is also obvious that some of them (particularly Richard) had learned something of what the teacher liked to hear. These pupils have learnt that only complimentary comments or constructive suggestions are acceptable in whole class discussion. Richard displays this in his dialogue. Mercer (1992) argued that if children are to talk successfully, they need to know the 'ground rules'. One disadvantage however of setting criterion-related boundaries to the discussion is that of restricting pupils' talk and preventing them from expressing independent and critical judgements about the music. This is especially likely in whole class discussion where teachers need to keep the talk of the class moving and set up guidelines for discussion. Setting such limitations could be seen to constrain the pupil discussion in lesson 1.

The quality of the appraising dialogue is poor in my colleague's lesson overall. The teacher tends to develop what they are saying less but she is having a difficult time with her control of the lesson. Noise and unwanted talk is disrupting her ability to obtain good responses from the pupil. As a consequence, development and improvement responses are less apparent and the pupils do not seem to know what is expected in their talk about their work. In lesson 1, criteria for their compositions is stated on the whiteboard and discussion in lesson 1 revolves around these criteria. Criteria for lesson 1 for example stated that pupils should be able to include in their

composition; an improvised melody, a steady drone, a tala rhythm, synchronised parts and a musical sound. Dialogue 4.3 gives examples of the use of some of these criteria.

In lesson 2, my colleague invites comments from pupils about a composed piece which has just been demonstrated :

Dialogue 4.5

Teacher	Any other comments from anybody else?	
	How could it have been improved? It was quite good, it was interesting. How could it have been made more interesting?	
Pupil	A bit more loud.	
Teacher	Could 've been a bit louder. It wasn't too bad.	
	What do you mean?	
Pupil	A bit more loud.....	Very noisy - dialogue lost.
Teacher	You're all talking - especially that table over there.	Quiet
Pupil	A bit more tune or beat in it.	
Teacher	A bit more tune and beat. Can anyone say anything more about that?	
	Could it have been made more interesting in any way?	
	What were they saying a lot of?	
Pupil	They kept saying "I'm going to.., I'm going to"	Pupil =Philip(cellist)
Teacher	Yes there was a lot of 'I'm going to' What could they have done to make it more interesting?, make it more varied, what could he have done?	
Pupil	I'm or we're going to and things like that.	The teacher is not really
Pupil	All they got to do, all they got to do.....	listening to the pupils' ideas.
Teacher	What they could've done would have actually made it a lot more interesting if you'd have	

made it, I'm going to such and such, such and such. - and if they'd come in at different times, then it would have been superb and brilliant!

I would have thought...wow and brilliant. ..but it wasn't is the inference!

It was a little bit ordinary because they were saying, 'I'm going to, I'm going to', its a little bit too easy that really.

Nonetheless, they didn't have a lot of time to do it and it was quite good but try to make yours more interesting next time.not worked hard enough.

The pupils task here was to chant rhythms using the names of London Underground Stations. They can use their chant then in a round if they choose to or keep it as a single line chant. The pupils here were inventive in adding to the chanting of station names, "I'm going to...." The teacher tells the pupils that she did not like this constantly repeated for every station, but that if they had used, "I'm going to...." once only, then repeated the station names in a list, even as a round, then it would be "brilliant". She criticises their attempt to bring something different into the piece as, "a little bit too easy." Here the teacher is deviating from the task criteria when she tells them what she would have preferred. She is also telling them this at a stage when she is giving pupils no time to improve, since this is summative discussion. Appraising which is summative has to be sensitively handled with only the composers themselves hearing what is said. Criticising them without giving them a chance to improve their work in front of the class is not helpful in motivating pupils to compose. It is like saying that it did not reach the required standard. It is not helping to create a non-threatening environment in the classroom.

Manipulative responses

Manipulative responses are those where the teacher is putting ideas to the pupils of what she likes to hear, or when she gives an opinion which is not related to the criteria set for this task. She is not allowing pupils to put forward their own ideas. In example 4.5 above, the teacher has a clear idea

of what she wants to hear, or what she likes or dislikes. Her comments are not related to clearly stated criteria which is made evident to the pupils at the start of the lesson. She is being ‘manipulative’ when she says that, “if they’d come in at different times, then it would have been superb and brilliant” and when she said that their piece in which they chanted, “I’m going to...I’m going to....” is a bit too easy really, she is imposing her subjective ideas onto the pupils. If appraising takes place during the process, then such problems should be commented on at that time so that pupils can correct their work. Manipulative teacher comments are unhelpful in the appraising process since they tend to be the teacher’s own particular opinions . Another listener might think that the pupils’ idea was a good one but that it needed more work to make it tidier. Another example of manipulative comments is shown in dialogue 4.2 where the teacher decides that the hissing is the doors closing. As an observer in the classroom it was clear that the glances of the pupils who had composed that piece had not intended that to be the case. The teacher once again was not listening to pupils’ ideas but imposing her own on them and then congratulating them. These comments are manipulative. In the classroom the children’s ideas have to be respected whether we like them or not, as long as they meet the criteria and demonstrate their understanding of concepts involved and that they fulfil the task instructions.

Figure 4.2 on the next page summarises these six types of teacher responses to pupils’ comments and provides an example of each and a comment to clarify its meaning and importance in pupil/teacher interaction.

Fig 4.2 - Teacher Questioning/Responses to pupil comments

<i>Type of teacher comment</i>	<i>Teacher Talk</i>	<i>Commentary</i>
Celebration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher praises composed music after it is performed. 2. Teacher praises verbal responses in discussion about composing. 	Teacher praise is important feedback. It must be seen to be well earned. It provides confidence building.
Acceptance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher indicates acceptance of a pupils comment. 2. Teacher confirms that a pupil's comment is valid. 	Important to confirm that appraising is appropriate to encourage pupils to believe that their comments are valued.
Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher responses probes further to find if pupil's understands a concept or idea 2. Teacher probes further to get pupil to develop an idea. 3. Teacher 'tests' pupils for understanding of concepts. 	Presenting pupils with a positive non-threatening environment where their comments are valued
Assessment/improvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher uses responses to teach a particular point or idea. 2. Teacher uses responses to improve pupil's understanding 	Formative assessing also relates to criteria. Judgements are made in relation to the extent to which pupils meet them.
Criterion-related responses	The teacher refers throughout to pre-agreed criteria for the practical task	All talk should relate to these for effective teaching and assessing to take place.
Manipulative responses	Unhelpful responses where the teacher provides her own personal judgements criticising or praising things that are not criteria related.	Examples include telling pupil what would have been better but which is a subjective judgement.

Findings from Cycle 1 – Pupil Talk

The findings in this cycle suggest that pupils find articulating ideas orally in a classroom very difficult. Fluency appears to be a main problem with responses which tend to be short or interspersed with pauses. The examples of dialogue given in this chapter all illustrate this clearly. To talk critically but sensitively towards others, which is required here, involves pupils articulating their ideas as well as having the confidence to speak out in class. Clearly some pupils have more confidence than others and are more articulate than others. Amy is notable in being willing to talk, as is Richard. Many pupils do not speak at all. One or two word answers are generally given. Sometimes the teacher addresses a pupil about his or her *own* work in order to clarify a point :

Dialogue 4.6

Teacher Do you understand what we are doing? I think you do.

Richard Change the actual notes you are playing

Teacher So you are not playing two repeated patterns

Later,

Teacher Now what were you saying Laura?

Laura It (the drone) was the same as the raga as well

Teacher Yes, you were just playing the raga instead of developing it.

These pupils are responding to the teacher's question and providing a useful dialogue in helping another pupil to improve his work.

A further type of response by the pupil is feedback to other pupils, where the pupil is contributing to the lesson with constructive suggestions for other pupils. The dialogue above with Richard and Laura is an example of this where the pupil's appraising helps the teacher to re-direct another pupil's understanding. For this type of response to be helpful, pupils need to be constructive rather than critical.

Some pupil responses are factual. An earlier extract with Laura (dialogue 4.4) demonstrated her good understanding of ragas in relation to factual knowledge.

Figure 4.3 on the next page summarises these types of responses and provides a definition of each.

Fig 4.3 - Types of Pupil Responses

<i>Type of pupil comment</i>	<i>Commentary</i>
Brief superficial	Short answers interspersed with pauses. One or two words only
Pupil feedback	Pupils help each other through appraising. Their talk together helps others to understand what they should be doing. Responses need to be constructive not critical.
Answers to the teacher's questions	As above, these responses provide helpful feedback to both the teacher and to other people.
Factual	Good understanding of concepts involved. Demonstration in answers – factual mainly.

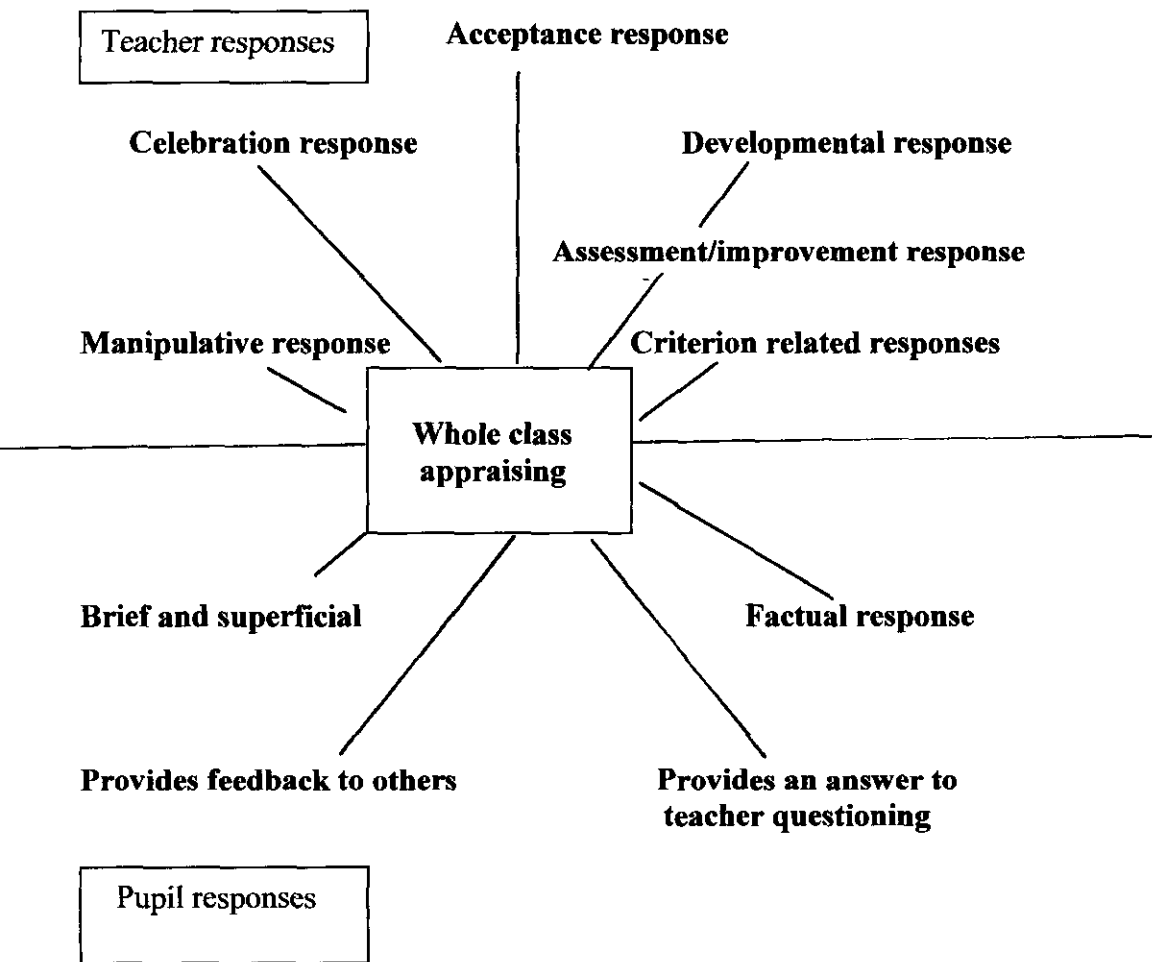
An important musical note

The musical compositions of the children in lesson 1 showed evidence of improvement after listening to each others' demonstrations and discussions of what is expected. These findings are not shown in the discussions because it is the dialogue not the quality of musical output which is the focus of this research. However, if appraising is to prove useful in the composing process then it should help pupil to improve through musical demonstration and discussion. It is a combination of both processes which encourages pupils to move forward with new ideas.

A Summary of findings from Cycle 1

Figure 4.4 summarises the types of responses, both teacher and pupil from the evidence of Cycle 1.

Fig 4.4: Responses evidenced in Cycle 1/Reconnaissance



The findings from Cycle 1 revealed that different teaching styles elicit different types of verbal responses from the pupils. The pupils are more reluctant to talk when there is quiet in lesson 1, while in lesson 2 the noisy atmosphere makes it less threatening. Here pupils seem less restrained. In both lessons, with both teachers however, responses are relatively brief and are confined to a few pupils in the class who are willing to speak. Teachers tend to give positive responses in lessons where pupils are demonstrating their compositions. The next most frequent teacher response is questioning. Teachers do try to help pupils to improve their practical work either by further questioning to grasp their understanding of what they are doing or by giving advice to help their understanding. It was found that in lesson 1, questions tended to be accompanied by advice. Pupils do improve their musical compositions and performances as a result of listening to other pupils' demonstrations and also as a result of the appraising process. This often includes teaching points.

Appraising is most effective when it is conducted during the composing process. There is little point in discussing work when it is being performed for the last time. Comments made by the teacher at the summative stage of assessment tend to be viewed as judgemental by the pupils. In lesson 2 comments were made for improvement yet the pupils were not being given the opportunity to work on their compositions again. These comments can only be seen as criticisms. When appraising, teachers tried to develop pupil's skills through further questioning to probe further into their understanding. Teachers are able to observe errors of understanding through practical demonstrations and through appraising and this can help pupils to correct these problems before any final assessment takes place. Appraising and formative assessing do appear to be linked processes in these lessons when appraising takes place during the process of composing rather than at the end of a composing task.

The findings here support, in general terms the writers reviewed in chapter 3 (Barnes, 1996; Philips, 1986; Edwards and Mercer, 1987), that whole class talk with the teacher tends to be dominated by the teacher. The teacher's comments here generally present a positive work climate with praise and encouragement. However, pupil responses tend to be short and so teacher

talk steers the pupils in his/her chosen direction. The teacher instructs and tries to get pupils to talk more but in the process still dominates. Many pupils do not join in with this talk at all.

Discussion of Findings in relation to the research questions

The descriptive claims of Cycle 1 are that pupils engage in appraising activities in the classroom: when engaged in composing tasks where they are required to demonstrate to others their products as they are engaged in the process of composing; when they collaborate to improve and refine their music pieces as a result of talk which clarifies what is seen to be appropriate and what is not; when they listen to the work of others and provide constructive criticism to help with the improvement of their work; when they use the experience and skills already gained in work of this nature together with knowledge already gained to further their own understanding of musical concepts being taught.

The teacher's role in classroom appraising is explored in Cycle 1 and the findings indicate a need for a new classroom learning strategy to enable pupils to talk more freely about their work. In the findings, an analysis of teacher responses to pupil talk reveals that positive encouragement accounts for a majority of comments made. This is not surprising given that pupil's own work is the subject of the dialogue. Barrett (1996) in discussing music learning in the primary school discusses responses given by teachers in this type of context. She stresses that responses by the teacher should be a continuous component of the learning experience and learners should be encouraged to initiate evaluation and to rely increasingly on their own judgements in developing the ability to analyse their own work critically. 'Articulating what they mean' appears to be a problem for pupils in these lessons. Mercer (1994) in an article on language in the classroom indicates that teachers ask questions to monitor children's knowledge and understanding (evaluating their teaching and assessing the learning of their pupils), but also they use questions to shape the course of children's learning. Many writers here argued that teachers' questions often constrain and limit the direction of classroom discussion. The short responses expected of pupils inhibit pupils' intellectual activity. However, Mercer also

sees the teacher's questions as a form of 'scaffolding' in eliciting further questions to encourage more thought and clarification. On a negative note however, Edwards and Westgate (1994) state that teachers often ask so many questions that pupils' questions are crowded out. The evidence from these two lessons indicates that pupils are not given enough opportunity to 'talk' about their work in a realistic way. Edwards and Westgate suggest that placing pupils in small groups to explore meanings collaboratively gives them more responsibility for their talk. Talking to pupils in small groups 'privately' may be more constructive and encourage more dialogue about their work.

The nature of the learning process between pupil and teacher and between pupils and their peers in the classroom is an important research issue here. In both lessons, the teacher acts as facilitator; but to what extent is she leading and directing the discussion, or even manipulating its passage? The teacher dialogue heavily dominates both lessons observed. The teachers' scaffolding approach to learning is designed to allow pupils to further their understanding of the task. In lesson 1, I attempted to create a constructivist learning environment where "the learner is actively constructing his or her own meanings.....(and) that construction of meaning is an active process of hypothesising and hypothesis testing, and has the consequence that the learner is seen as being ultimately responsible for their own learning" (Watts & Bentley, 1989, p163). While it is envisaged by the teacher that this is the case and through demonstration of music and talk pupils learn what is required, how far is such learning in reality didactic? Laying down criteria and showing pupils what is required is not allowing them to be imaginative and creative. To what extent is this lesson constructivist in nature? The most constructivist parts of the lessons were 'cut' from the lesson observation because they occurred when the teacher moved around the room to talk to small groups during the process of their composing or when pupils talk to each other about their work. These encounters were impossible to video record and translate because of the musical noise of the classroom. Through the analysis it is evident that these interactions that are more important to the appraising process and so it is these pupil to pupil encounters which will need closer investigation in Cycle 2.

Evidence of learning in the lesson can be demonstrated musically. In the process of revising and refining work after 'talk' has taken place, improvements are apparent in lesson 1, although this data has not been shown explicitly in the findings because it was decided at the outset that musical examples would not be used or notated in the research because the focus is essentially about the talk. The case of Fiona is a good example where improvements after talk is evident. Laura suggests that Fiona's drum rhythm should be different from the drone rhythm. The teacher agrees and helps Fiona during the next period of practise to improve her drum beat. Strategies are suggested as she struggles to remember the rhythm and to keep her beat in time. On a second performance to the class, Fiona is still *struggling but there is an improvement and an attempt to reach a new level of skill learning here*. Fiona could be said to be trying to reach a new zone of achievement here, that with help she will bridge the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky in; Watts & Bentley, 1989) More work is needed for Fiona to play securely an independent rhythm with others but here she demonstrates an attempt to master it. Other pieces in the class were changed to make a different drum rhythm to the overall rhythm of the drone. Mark, Richard and James also put in 'quicker notes' to make a raga melody more interesting. All these changes were acted upon after the talk and demonstrations earlier in the lesson. This suggests that talk and demonstration led to improvements in the composing products but it has to be remembered that other factors could be responsible, such as for example, more time to improve work.

The role of musical vocabulary was discussed in the literature review and some writers are shown to be in favour of a more intuitive approach to appraising where pupils are encouraged to talk about how they feel about the music or what it makes them think of. An affective approach to appraising is favoured by both Mellor (2000) and Hughes (1999). In the first lesson, the teacher directs the discussion. It is clear that the children are only allowed to talk positively about work performed by others or they can make suggestions as to how a piece of work might be improved. The criteria of what the composition should involve limits the scope of what pupils can say about the composition being presented. The talk therefore holds many constraints. Pupils are also being encouraged implicitly to use musical

vocabulary. There is only limited freedom for these pupils to develop their talk and the confines of the whole class context makes the potential for meaningful reflective talk very difficult.

Bernard's research, reviewed in chapter 2 (2000a, 2000b) focuses on helping children to make meaning of their composing work through reflective talk. She emphasises that they need to think and talk about the *processes* of what they are doing. In the constrained context of whole class work, children have less time to reflect and talk about what they are doing. They appear to be 'dragged along' with a process which allows them not enough time to reflect on their own work. They are encouraged to listen to others' work and appraise that. The emphasis in the lessons of Cycle 1 appear to be on making sense of concepts explored by pupils in their compositions and often explained during the appraising discussion by the teacher. Burnard's research suggests that musical materials need to relate to each other in order to allow pupils to make connections in order for them to make meaning of what they are doing. The teacher's role may therefore be one of setting up these musical connections within a task or allowing pupils to discover these for themselves. In this way pupils will be free to reflect on what it is to improvise or compose. As well as providing opportunities for key stage 3 pupils to be observed composing and talking in small groups, they will also be interviewed in pairs or small groups following their observations to reflect further on the processes of composition by watching the video recording. Cycle 2 will also explore discussions between the teacher and older pupils on a one-to-one basis. This will provide the pupils with more time to reflect on their work. These new strategies may allow pupils more time to be reflective and to talk meaningfully about their work, allowing them to express verbally some of their thinking.

Pupils engage in appraising activities 'in their heads' silently. It is manifest through evaluations and 'talk'. To develop appraising skills of criticism and analysis, teachers need to foster the right environment where a sympathetic and non-threatening context allows pupils to discuss their work with others. In attempting to get pupils to criticise positively and make suggestions about each others' composing, it has been found that a whole group context may not be the ideal arena for encouraging pupils to talk about their work.

Social constraints impinge on some pupils' willingness to speak and the 'public' arena does not encourage extended discussion nor pupil to pupil discussion. One to one discussion, teacher with a small group discussion, listening to pupil-pupil discussions and encouraging inter-group appraisals will be strategies investigated in Cycle 2.

CHAPTER 5 : CYCLE 2

Hypotheses for Cycle 2

Elliott (1991) suggests that as part of the reconnaissance stage in action research, it is useful to develop some hypotheses which can then be tested in the next cycle's action steps. In Cycle 2, alternative classroom learning strategies will investigate the following hypotheses which relate to some of the research questions.

1. Children in small groups (4-6 pupils aged between 11 and 14 years) talking about their work in process will talk spontaneously and reveal some of their thinking about what they are doing. (Research question 3)
2. Children in small groups reviewing and evaluating their contribution to the lesson by watching the video will reveal what they know about the process of composing and improvising (Burnard, 2000).
3. Slightly older students (aged 16 years) who have chosen to study music as an examination subject will talk using musical terminology and will demonstrate a more critical approach to appraising.

Revised General Plan (See Fig 5.1)

The Contexts – Action steps 1, 2 and 3

There are three new teaching strategies explored in cycle 2. The aim of these new ways of working is to allow pupils to work and talk uninhibited by the teacher. Once given the task, the pupils are expected to collaborate with their group to plan their musical composition. Children will be constructing their own meanings relating to the activities without the teacher intervening. Teacher contact should be for interaction rather than manipulation.

Figure 5.1

Observations and Interviews in cycle 2- Action Steps 1, 2 and 3

Observation	Group A (i)	Year 7 sub-group working together on composing task.
Observation	Group A (ii)	Lesson 2 – same year 7 sub-group developing composing work.
Interview	Group A (iii)	Two members of same sub-group discuss work done in lessons.
Observation	Group B	Year 7 sub-group from a different class work on same project.
Observation	Group C (i)	Year 9 pupils in a sub-group work on Blues composing task
Interview	Group C (ii)	Some of Year 9 pupils from same sub-group discuss work of lesson.
Interview	Year 11	Individuals talk to the teacher about their work.

Action Steps 1 and 2 – Small Group Work and related interviews.

Action Step 1 refers to year 7 and 9 observations of sub-groups. Action Step 2 refers to year 7 and 9 interviews as follow up of lesson observations and Action Step 3 will later refer to individual interviews with year 11 students.

Group A (i) (ii) observations

The two observed lessons took place on consecutive weeks at the beginning of the Spring term. The class consists of 26 pupils of which 16 are girls and only 10 are boys. Within this class, 3 girls and 1 boy are exceptionally musical. That is they play one or more instruments competently for their age and they all display a higher than average level of musical ability. Three of these pupils were in the observed group (2 girls and 1 boy). The other boy making up the sub-group also has instrumental lessons and so is musically able. The topic is rhythm, the same one used in the pilot study, now one year later. The objective of these two lessons is to encourage pupils to use rhythmic sounds to construct a rhythmic performance using the voice, as in choral speaking. They are also encouraged to link written rhythmic notation to sound in the composing process. An interview with two members of the group follows the lessons. This involves evaluating aspects of the lesson by watching extracts of the lesson on video. The children are encouraged to talk about what they were doing.

Group A (i) Observation [A full transcription is given in appendix 1]

The teacher plays on the tape recorder a chant piece by John Paynter (1989) called “....and all stations to”, which uses the names of railway stations in a rhythmic chant. Discussion with the teacher establishes in what ways, if any, it is ‘musical’. Pupils are given a worksheet on one side of which is a ‘Map of the London Underground’, and on the other side are four columns with the following rhythms, together with one example of an underground station to fit this rhythm, below it.

Example

2 4 O			
Bank	Queensway	Marble Arch	Oxford Circus

In pairs, pupils are expected to find more names of Underground stations to fit each rhythm/column. In groups of four, pupils are then asked to share words chosen and invent a chant of their own to perform using the rhythms in a grid of 4 x 4 squares, a total of 16 names. They can put rhythms in any

order, they can repeat names and they can leave gaps. Each box on the grid consists of a 2 beat name or a silence (a rest). Some pupils are sent to work in separate areas to allow them to work without too much noise distraction and also because this is normal practice for practical work. Unusually, in this lesson the instruments here are the pupil's voices. Emily, Anna, Nick and Roger are sent into a large practice room. The fact that there is a video camera there has been explained to them by the teacher before the lesson. They have been informed that the video is for use by the teacher only in some work that she is doing looking at pupils working on their music compositions and that no-one in the school will watch the recording. It will be confidential between the group and the teacher. They have been asked to agree to this, and all have said that it is fine. The group are told that they will be left to work on their piece until 15 minutes before the end of the lesson when all pupils will present their work to the rest of the class.

Commentary

Group A is dominated by Anna who takes on the role of leader. She decides the strategy for working, turning the task on writing down their rhythmic piece into a 'turns-taking' game. Emily is very quiet and acts as 'scribe'. Nick is a bit uncomfortable with Anna's role as leader. He involves himself in the task but is overall very quiet. Roger competes throughout for the role of leader. He has constructive ideas, "we don't want every single line ending in 'Bank'." At other times Roger is bored and so he causes problems for the group. He sings the Welsh National Anthem, says things like, "Can I just mention for no reason whatsoever, that Man United are the World's best team." He constantly refers to the 'fly- on-the-wall' camera or 'our friend'. Despite all this, the group do work. The pace is slow and when the rest of the class elsewhere have finished rehearsing their first performances, this group has not finished inventing their piece. The talk is often superfluous to the task and the dynamics of the group prevents progress being made with the task.

Group A (ii) Observation

One week later in lesson 2, the teacher asks the pupils to recall what they were doing in the previous lesson. She then plays, on the tape recorder, a

new version of, "and all stations to....", where four people use the same chant using station names in a round. The teacher asks the pupils about this performance and suggests that they too can vary their performance. She suggests a number of ideas and writes them on the white board. These include; (i) a round, (ii) an ostinato (a repeated phrase or line chanted over and over) and (iii) a combination of these ideas. Pupils go to their same 'spaces' to work. The video-observed sub-group go to the practice room for another period of unsupervised work. This is once again video-recorded. The last 20 minutes of the lesson is a performance of each finalised piece which is audio recorded by the teacher and assessed in relation to criteria agreed on the whiteboard at the beginning of the lesson.

Group A (iii) Interview

Two members only of the sub-group turn up to talk about their work in the lesson. Extracts of the video are watched together first. For the purposes of the research, it was decided to conduct the interview outside the lesson context in a lunchtime. In a noisy classroom context, the audio recording would not be heard and it would not be possible for the teacher to spend a long time in a practice room away from the class

Commentary

Anna and Emily's evaluation of their work in the lesson was critical of the lack of progress and the behaviour of Roger. They discussed some of the ideas and who had suggested them. They seemed very concerned with who was responsible for which ideas. They also place the blame onto Roger for helping to spoil their performance. They did realise that once they reached the stage of rehearsing their performance, they were able to revise and refine composed ideas to improve the piece.

Group B - Observation¹

During week 2 of the year 7 project described, the teacher decided to video record another year 7 sub-group working on the same project. The decision was made because the researcher/teacher was aware of the bias of observing musically able and very articulate pupils. This second sub-group consists of

¹ There is no lesson 1, it was not observed but this lesson is lesson 2 of those described.

4 girls who were not specially selected by the teacher. Only 1 of the girls here is musically able, she is having instrumental music lessons. The other 3 girls do not, and are of average ability in the class. The video recording shows them working on week 2 of their project and it is mostly concerned with the performance of their 'composition'.

Commentary

As the teacher I felt uncomfortable that group A were made up of so many musical pupils also with strong characters. I felt that I needed to observe the way another group worked in the same scenario. Group B sub-group of four girls are from a different class and they are average achievers in music lessons. Only one member of this friendship group plays a musical instrument. Carlene plays the saxophone. Once again the pace is slow. The teacher intervenes to move them along. They are however focussed on the task. They take very little time inventing their piece and most of the time is spent refining their performance, changing things as they go along. Their talk is evaluative and constructive to the task.

Class C (i) Observation²

The year 9 lesson took place at the beginning of the Spring Term. The lesson observed is part of a second lesson in which a sub-group of pupils are working on an instrumental arrangement based on a 12 bar blues framework. They are part of the group who have been observed previously in this research study when they were in year 8,

The class now consist of 23 pupils, of which 14 are girls and only 9 are boys. Some (a small group of 3 or 4) of the boys are the subject of particular behavioural problems across the school in a range of subject areas. The sub-group consists of six girls, all of whom have instrumental music lessons. Most of this group regularly work together in a practice room using their own instruments and the piano. The lesson which is video recorded is the second of two lessons. The first was essentially a performing lesson where they were asked to experiment with the riffs that make up the 12 bar blues bass. Having been given the riff based on the C chord, they are

² Once again there is no lesson 1 here. It was not observed but this is lesson 2 of those described.

expected to work out the same riff for chords F and G and to learn to perform it. For this group, this task was completed in a very short time. The group were then asked to improvise melodies above the riff. This is the work that they are continuing in week 2.

Commentary

This group consists of six girls, a friendship group who work together regularly in music lessons because many are instrumental players. Gemma is playing the cello, Emma the bongo drums, Sarah and Rachel play xylophones and Laura and Amy share the piano. There is surprisingly little dialogue. The talk supports their musical experimentation and improvisation. Here improvising ideas and working together as a team to ensure that parts fit together is the focus. Talk is about notes to use and ideas they like or reject.

Group C (ii) Interview [See appendix 3 for the full transcription]

As a follow-up to the lesson, members of the group were invited to watch the video recording of their work and talk about it with the teacher. As with the year 7 interviews, this discussion would normally take place in the context of a lesson but for the purposes of the research was more conveniently held in a lunchtime.

Commentary

Five of this group watch the video of their lesson. They talked about how they composed and they discussed the way they experimented to find out what melodies went well with the blues bass line. They discussed the process of taking notes from the bass to help them make up their melodies. They had the idea of inverting one melody and playing it together with their original melody which sounded very effective. They also discussed the lack of freedom in working with a blues bass framework where the chords are already decided for them and where every verse will work around the same harmonies.

Action Step 3 – Individual Interviews

Five Individual Interviews with the Teacher [Appendix 4 is a record of one of the interviews]

Year 11 (16 year old pupils) at the beginning of the Spring Term are following up their mock GCSE examination with written evaluations and discussions with the teacher about their composition folio which is soon to be submitted. Each of the five pupils whose interviews are audio recorded with their permission, have achieved well in their composing work.

Commentary

Individual talks to evaluate their work included focused plans for what they needed to do to finalise their pieces for submission. Some of the talk involved pupils in reviewing how they composed something or why they chose to do something in a certain way. Speeds, instruments, introductions and practical issues were all discussed with each pupil. Most pupils appeared unhappy with some aspects of their composing. Only one pupil, Jason, had confidence in both his compositions and in his talk about them.

Findings – Cycle 2

Analysis of the classroom data pointed to a number of different types of appraising at work in the varied classroom settings explored in Cycle 2. Each type of appraising will be discussed here in turn.

Reassurance

Oral appraising for a large part of the time offers the pupil praise and reassurance. This is especially true of the teacher's role. This was evident in whole class appraising in cycle 1 and is evident whenever the teacher is taking a dominant role. The teacher appears to see this praise and encouragement as a vital role in the dialogue especially when the pupils seem unable to talk in detail about their work. Pupil response to the music composed at this level is at a superficial, feeling response stage ('sensuous',

Swanwick's term,1994) Matthew, a GCSE pupil discusses his work with his teacher.

T-Do you like it?

M-Yes

T-You know, as a piece of music, do you like the tune?

M-Yes

T-There is a problem with the tune?

M-It's too high.

(Later, listening to another composition)

T-What made you write this?

M-You said we had to write something for a group of instruments.

T-But what gave you the ideas?

M-I had a chord pattern to start with; D Major, G Major, A Major, D Major, those were your chords, (the teacher's chords).

Matthew gives no extended answers here, none arise from his own initiative. Even his composing is reliant on the teacher's ideas for stimulus. Age here does not seem to relate to the quality of talk. Matthew should have a good understanding of musical terms and concepts that *should* allow him to discuss his work more fully and analytically but he does not demonstrate that he can in the lengthy discussion with the teacher about his work. It is interesting to note here that the relationship of the participants of this conversation is hierarchical with the teacher/pupil role putting the teacher in the dominant role and the pupils in a vulnerable one. Emily in group A is also in a vulnerable role because she is dominated by her friend Anna who has taken on a leadership role. She also has little to say and does everything that Anna tells her to. Her appraising relies on others. She has a good musical background and should understand relevant musical concepts and therefore should be able to talk about the music task in an informed way. However, like Matthew, she has a quieter personality. The 'reassurance' level of appraising is characterised by the pupils 'inability to hold extended dialogue'. The teacher responds by attempting to make the pupils more confident about their work.

Descriptive

The commonest type of talk involves 'description'. Pupils tell each other what they are doing or what they did to produce this piece of work. Research group A was particularly descriptive in their dialogue together. Anna invented a strategy which she presided over. This involved each member of the group in taking turns in suggesting rhythms for the final chant piece. There is little evaluation of what they are doing. It is process talk.

"Let's jot down some rhythms at random"

"I know we'll take it in turns in saying one of these"

"Do I have to write quavers?"

"I'll have one beat and two quavers this time"

These statements represent some typical sentences from their dialogue. Group B's conversation was also largely descriptive. Unlike group A, they worked without discussing procedures but their tactics are to perform their chant, changing it as they go. Suggestions to go faster or louder are taken up by the group without question. Carlene took up the teacher's suggestion to look at the dynamics (loud and quiet contrasts) of their piece. Lyndsey wants a crescendo (getting gradually louder) at the end. Carly wants to go faster and Lyndsey suggests soft might be slow and loud is faster. The teacher's intervention here appears to have helped this group make musical progress. The nature of the interaction with the teacher here is constructivist, the pupils take up the suggestions and make new meanings from what they have already composed. Pupils appraising at the descriptive level respond to the teacher's suggestions. Their work requires teacher intervention in order that the musical learning might move forward, for pupil progress to be made. In the one-to-one interviews, Rachel tended to give brief answers and where her answers were longer they were largely descriptive: "It (the accompaniment) doesn't relate at all to the piece, its alright in the second part, its fine, but in the first part – it's got...it just doesn't seem to have the structural....". Overall however, the teacher dominates the conversation

trying to steer the talk onto productive areas of discussing her work. A few of Rachel's comments express opinions but these are not criterion related opinions.

"Yes, I'm not happy with that one."

"Yes, I like that one."

Neither of these comments have any additional qualification appended to them. Rachel has excellent musical knowledge and later gained the highest GCSE grade in the subject, but in teacher/pupil discussion - a more threatening position for the pupils and a teacher dominated situation - Rachel's appraising remains at a 'descriptive' and 'opinion' stage. Her responses to the music here are still at the 'sensuous', feeling response stage. To summarise, pupils who appraise descriptively still tend to rely on the teacher to guide their musical progress. Their level of musical knowledge again does not appear to bear any relationship to their level of appraising. The 'descriptive' level of appraising is a useful starting point for all pupils talking about their work. At this level, teacher questions ask, "Tell me what you did?" and this will usually prompt the pupil to respond with a description of their work.

Opinion

When pupils were working together in the whole class context in Cycle 1 of this research, pupils tended to be encouraged by the teacher in lesson 1 to qualify their opinions with reasons. Criteria were stated at the beginning of the lesson, the raga improvisation must not be too repetitive, the drone repeats in a cycle, the percussion part should have an independent rhythm and all parts should synchronise. The teacher's dialogue attempted to relate opinion to these essential criteria.

Richard-She needs to be a bit louder.

T-There were lots of things you could say about that one.

R-Quite good. (no reason given)

The teacher cannot get the pupils to extend answers. Later,

Laura-It was a good idea for Sarah to have a rest.

Once again, a valid point but no extended reasonings present. Later still,

R-They played very well because they played like the notes were exactly in time.

Here we have an attempt by the pupil to give a reason for what they did, that is a 'qualified opinion'. These comments expressed opinions about people's work but they did not always relate to any criteria and often they remain unqualified.

In Cycle 1, the one-to-one interviews revealed pupils giving opinions about their work when prompted to by the teacher. Rachel takes quite a lot of prompting by the teacher to produce reasons for her opinions.

T-Shall we have a look at..... I think there are a few issues here.

R-Yes, I'm not happy with this one.

T-What are you not sure about?

R-the accompaniment.

T-Yes, what about the accompaniment?

R-It doesn't relate at all to the piece. It's alright in the second part....but in the first part it just doesn't seem to have the structural.....

Here, Rachel begins to talk about her reasons for not liking this piece. She uses words such as 'structural', suggesting that she has a good understanding of the composing process. The teacher has to extract from her reasons for her opinions. This characterises this type of appraising where pupils make statements about their work but cannot always relate them to criteria. The conversations are largely teacher led. At this level of appraising, pupils qualify their reason for doing what they did in their

composing work. The description is taken one step further. “I did this because.....”

Affective responses

Jason’s one-to-one interview reveals an affective response to the music, which in turn leads his appraising to reflect this expression of engagement with the music.

T-It looks as if you’ve....used the music to illustrate the words.

J-That’s what I tried to do....yes.

T-Very good, yes – dancing in the breeze.

J-Especially with the cloud-that’s why I went up rather than- you know to give it a feeling of height.

(They discuss whether it is too high pitched for the singers.)

T-The only other consideration is whether a tenor could sing it an octave lower, but I think it would still be the same problem.

J-I suppose I don’t want to spoil the imagery that I’ve tried to create.

Jason’s imagery here and his engagement with the music he has created demonstrated effectively this stage of appraising. His comments were spontaneous. Swanwick’s stage of musical response after the basic ‘sensuous’ feeling response to the music, is the intuitive, affective response where aesthetic knowledge informs an affective response (Swanwick, 1988, See chapter 2, p22 of this study). It is interesting to note that affective responses appear to occur most when discussing products that are almost complete. Work in process is less likely to yield appraising talk that states preferences and engagement in the same way. Teachers are also likely to engage in feeling talk, giving praise and encouragement with suggestions for further improvements. As a musical/aesthetic criticism skill, the affective response is vital. Engagement with their own pieces of music and with feelings about that piece is what Ross et al (1993) found was, “an exciting revelation...with the aim...of celebrating arts work in all its particularity and immediacy” (Ross et al, 1993, p156). In the context of assessment, Ross also found that talk required much teacher engagement

with the product to help the pupils to be more involved in their own creations. This is an exciting stage where the teacher/pupil relationship is reflected as being more equal in their shared engagement with the art product, here the composed piece of music. Appraising at this level demonstrates a confidence in a pupil's own composing and talk with the teacher which shares an engagement with the music, encourages this attachment and confidence even further.

Evaluation

Group C, year 9 pupils in the pilot study, demonstrated that they could work alone without teacher intervention. Their behaviours were understood and shared by all members of the group and talk was minimal. They clearly respected each other's contributions and only stopped to make suggestions to each other to improve the outcome. They communicated through the development of the music they played. They could be said to be constructing meanings through the music they played with each other. In the follow up interview with the teacher they voiced some of their ideas, which are both descriptive and evaluative.

T-What were the problems?

Amy-Well, the blues bass line is restrictive but we tried to make the melody more interesting by adding two melodies going in opposite directions.

T-Could you have improved it?

Laura-I think we could have added another variation or verse if we had another week to work on it.

These comments show these year 9 pupils attempting to look at their work in a critical and evaluative way. Most of their comments are still largely descriptive but the indication here is that if the teacher probed further, these girls are capable of deeper evaluative comments in their appraising. Their musical responses are without doubt 'affective' and 'intuitive' responses (See chapter 2, p22). Evaluative comments require an affective engagement with the music. Jason's dialogue with the teacher demonstrates this more

clearly. He is talking about a piece of music he has called 'Question Mark' and which uses tone-rows, a twentieth century musical technique.

J-Well basically I wanted to try something that was a bit more abstract. It doesn't really symbolise anything. I suppose being confused and puzzled....This is emphasized I think by the triplets which presumably...off sets it slightly. You lose the feeling of a direct rhythm a bit.

Jason links the music to ideas. It is another example of imagery as in the earlier extract about his work. This affective engagement with the music helps him to be evaluative and constructive in his comments. It gives him a basis for his talk because he knows what he intended and therefore can evaluate the finished product against what he intended.

Evaluative appraising often occurs when pupils produce music which reflect prior ideas of intentions and which can be evaluated in relation to the degree to which intentions are realised. Evaluative appraising also occurs when pupils are able to provide reasons for why they decided to use a certain theme or idea. Again, Jason's work demonstrates many examples of this. His piece 'Millennium' uses a trumpet fanfare to hold the whole piece together. His middle section, he says, is looking back and his first and last sections are looking to the future. Swanwick's aesthetic knowledge stage of response to music is illustrated here in the way that Jason displays analytical knowledge, moving towards a stage of independent problem solving displaying conceptual understanding.

Problem Solving

Jason's talk about his work shows evidence of problem solving where he set himself a challenge and set about solving it as in his tone row piece.

"I don't know if that's going to work because sometimes the bottom tone row doesn't have enough tune."

“I tried to speed it up and then slow it down – the original (tone row), sort of bring it to a height.”

“ I tried to use syncopation but...”

All these comments suggest problem solving is happening. The identification of problems and the targeting of how to solve them is a part of Swanwick’s analytical or logical knowledge in response to music (See Chapter 2, p22). At this stage pupils are reaching a mature stage of the skills of musical criticism.

In the group work at lower school level, there are few examples of this problem solving type of appraising. For such a level of talk to occur there has to be affective engagement with the music and some real evaluative skills at work. There appears therefore to be a hierarchical development in the typology presented here. Fig 5.2 presents the stages described here as a hierarchical typology of appraising from a basic level of reassurance by the teacher where pupil responses are dependent on encouragement, where responses tend to remain also purely descriptive, to the fourth level, when engagement with their composing work enables students to respond to the affective qualities of their work, to go onto evaluate and eventually to problem solve in an analytical manner displaying conceptual knowledge, confidence in their work with personal satisfaction in what they produce.

Fig 5.2

A typology of Appraising

Levels	Characteristics	Musical Knowledge	Evidence of Change and Musical Learning
First level	Reassurance - students are mainly dependent on praise and encouragement.	Basic terminology and concepts used. Conceptual knowledge is not fully developed, often partial understanding of concepts.	Students are given reassurance or correction and therefore are able to 'keep going'
Second level	Description – students are able to offer accounts of what they are doing – respond to questions – often briefly – heavily teacher led.	Varied musical knowledge levels but pupils with a good knowledge of musical terms and concepts sometimes have this level of appraising because of lack of engagement with their composing work.	Teacher intervention allows students to improve work and to change direction. Teacher help may allow them to give opinions or to identify problems.
Third level	Opinion – students are making statements about their work, though not necessarily linking these to musical criteria – tends to be teacher led.	Varied again in age/command of musical knowledge even at this stage. Other factors cause students to be appraising at this level when they might be expected to be talking with more evaluative/affective responses to their music.	At this level, opinions are qualified or related to criteria. students consider why they think or feel something in relation to their composition.
Fourth level	Affective response – students are expressing affective qualities or responses to their work – more evidence of student engagement – comments may be spontaneous.	A better command of terminology and conceptual understanding together with affective engagement with the composing product produces some talk, which is interesting and productive.	Talk reinforces pupils' affective engagement with their musical compositions giving them more confidence in their own work.
Fifth Level	Evaluation – students are making detailed evaluative comments about their work, using musical criteria – students are able to take some lead or work in groups independent of teacher intervention.	This level of evaluating demands a good command of terminology related to the task as well as conceptual knowledge. Also essential at this level is engagement with the composition at an affective level. Some confidence in own work.	Students produce effective and satisfying pieces of music that reflect previous or original intentions. There is evidence that affective involvement with the music informs their evaluations or responses. Appraising relates to the degree to which intentions are realised.
Sixth Level	Problem Solving – students are able to identify problems and use group processes to negotiate solutions – groups can work independent of the teacher, or can develop single questions into extended analysis of their work.	Mature conceptual understandings and a wide background knowledge of structure, texture and unity of elements of composing. Confident of own work as being of value. Personal satisfaction in own work. Willingness to receive constructive criticism.	Identification of problems with new targets to be met which will allow a composition to change and grow. This will tend to be a more substantial piece or extended piece of work and will involve structure and unity.

Discussion of Findings

Musical Knowledge, Conceptual Knowledge and Analytical Knowledge

John Paynter (1997) views musical perception (where music as ‘thought’ is evident) as hierarchical: from a sensuous response, through technical understandings about structural features to a ‘complete’ understanding. (Paynter 1997, p10) Swanwick’s intuitive knowledge forms a bridge between sensory and analytical knowledge (Swanwick, 1994). Knowing here, involves constructing meanings which involve cognitive and often affective response. He sees symbolic understanding important as learners move from intuitive to analytical stages. Swanwick sees the process less hierarchically than Paynter, but as more of a dialectic relationship. He links these responses to the development of critical music perception, as educating for informed listening (Swanwick, 1994, p26-44). My own research findings mirror these stages of response to music from the sensuous or feeling responses of those appraising at the first three levels, after which a significant affective stage is reached where an intuitive or aesthetic response to the music (an active way of construing the world, Swanwick, 1994, p29) allows pupils to engage with their own work more effectively through a greater understanding of conceptual ideas employed. They talk with enthusiasm and confidence about their work, believing in what they have composed. In the fifth evaluative stage of appraising pupils demonstrate not only affective engagement and conceptual understanding but also are able to evaluate problems or changes which are needed. The sixth mature analytical response to music, which embodies affective and cognitive responses together with a conceptual understanding of the subject represents a level of appraising where pupils also have personal satisfaction in a complete composition which they know is valued. They are willing at this stage to receive criticism in order to revise their work. They are able to talk about their work in relation to structures and conceptual ideas. The intuitive, affective response is still present in analytical responses and this is suggested by Swanwick as a dialectic relationship between the two. Symbolism as part of this process of response is important. Jason’s imagery discussed earlier in this chapter is an example of the way my research

supports this idea. Representations of experiences give meaning to art products and Jason's symbolic suggestions allowed him to explain and share his understanding and meanings with another person, here the teacher. His imagery in using the music to link with the words of his song is one example of this. Swanwick's hierarchy of musical response supports and enhances the appraising typology presented here.

At the three basic levels of appraising, the findings suggested that some pupils working at basic levels of appraising have a developed knowledge of musical concepts and terminology, yet still display only basic levels of talk at a descriptive stage. It could be argued that some of these pupils might be capable of higher levels of appraising but that the contexts here did not allow them to evaluate or that they had not reached a mature stage of appraising because they needed more teacher help through further more appropriate questioning. By the fourth level of affective response, musical knowledge or conceptual understanding becomes more evidently necessary for this stage to be reached. Confidence, imagery and engagement with the composition can only be demonstrated when a real musical understanding is also evident. The two higher levels also depend on a growing understanding of musical terminology and concepts, the latter becoming more and more important hierarchically. These ideas are summarised in figure 5.3 on the next page where my own levels of appraising are compared with Paynter and Swanwick's hierarchical levels of perception and musical knowledge.

Fig 5.3 A Summary of the Relationship between musical, conceptual and analytical knowledge.

Levels	Characteristics	Musical Knowledge	Analytical Knowledge	Commentary
1	Reassurance	Basic terminology	Sensuous, feeling responses (Swanwick, Paynter)	Level of musical knowledge not always displaying appropriate level of appraising.
2	Descriptive	Varied – often partial understanding of concepts		
3	Opinions	Varied – as above		
4	Affective	A good command of terminology	Intuitive knowledge informs responses (Swanwick)	Musical knowledge & conceptual understanding necessary for engagement with music.
5	Evaluative	Conceptual knowledge.		
6	Problem solving	Mature conceptual understanding and wide background of related musical issues.	Analytical knowledge (Swanwick and Paynter)	Mature conceptual understanding of context of composition necessary for analysis to take place.

Evidence of musical learning and change in relation to appraising levels

It was noted earlier that although pupils’ learning in lessons in the form of their musical output, is crucial evidence that appraising pupils’ work is valuable, the *merits* of their composing work is not the focus of this study. Musical learning includes not only, as suggested, evidence that the musical product is improving but also a command of musical terminology and an understanding of concepts through construction of meanings in the process of appraising and engagement with the music. Progress in their ability to appraise gradually taking on ‘higher’ level thinking to express what the music means, is also an important part of the learning process and increasingly involves affective engagement with the music.

The findings suggest that at the earliest stages of appraising the outcomes in terms of musical learning is heavily reliant on the teacher to guide, steer and ask the right questions. In looking back at the data transcripts, especially in Cycle 1, it is evident that the teacher's questioning was often too ready to change the subject of discussion rather than probing further to make pupils think more about what they were doing. As a result of the teacher's praise and encouragement at the first level of 'reassurance', pupils are able to sustain their work and to 'keep going' or to 'keep on course'. In lesson 1, of Cycle 1, Seb and Robert were able to understand what they were supposed to do after the teacher had pointed out an error in their piece. At the second level of 'description', pupils are able to describe at length what they are doing, teacher intervention allows them to improve their work and to think about it, or to go off in a new direction. In chapter 2, the ideas of Vygotsky (Britton, 1989) were discussed and it was suggested that connections between ideas made by the child as a result of shared social activity leads to greater understanding. Evidence of this can be observed as happening when talk with peers or the teacher results in pupil's improvement of their work.

Pupils may give opinions or identify problems to their teacher. This kind of development was evident in Cycle 2, in group B's work, though they are still working at a descriptive level, they did evaluate the idea of using tempo and dynamics to add contrast to their piece. At the third level of 'opinion' appraising, students have opinions but generally are unable to give reasons for their opinions. Teacher intervention in appraising here can prompt the pupils to relate their opinions to criteria or to qualify why they think or feel something is or is not..... At the fourth affective level of appraising, pupils begin to engage with their feelings in relation to their work. Their feeling response is supported by musical knowledge and conceptual understanding. Talk about their work reinforces this engagement with their music and pupils grow in confidence. Unfortunately, although Jason's work demonstrates his engagement with his music, it does not provide verbal evidence for this since the talk engaged in did not probe further into his understanding and feelings about his work. It would appear however, that such conversations strengthen students' confidence and engagement with

their own work. Ross et al (1993) discovered that talk could encourage pupils to understand art works further by exploring its moods, its feelings and its contexts. Ross encourages students to question the significance of certain elements and demonstrates that ‘involvement’ in arts can generate further “dynamic, engaging, creative talk...” (Ross et al, 1993, p156). Engagement with the composition marks a significant stage in the appraising process. Jason particularly demonstrates this in his discussion of imagery in his work. At the fifth evaluative stage of appraising, pupils are still responding to music intuitively but they also demonstrate that they are able to evaluate affectively. Appraising relates to the degree to which their intentions have been realised. Evaluation at a basic level can occur without real engagement with the music, at the level of ‘opinion’, but now pupils are ‘involved’ in the extent to which they really want their music to work and are willing to discuss this. Jason’s discussion of his work clearly demonstrated this engagement and confidence in his work and allowed him to talk about why things are working and if this relates to his original intention. At the sixth level of appraising, pupils have reached a capability in analysis of their work, engaging analytical (logical) thought. This will allow them to identify problems without feeling they are being criticised and to target things to be improved. Answers will be sought as to why something works or not. Jason demonstrated evidence of problem solving but most of the data does not present pupils with problem solving activities at a level that might allow this to happen. Appraising at this stage, will involve the discussion of problems and the identification of new targets to be met. Work such as engaged in by A level composing students or those in higher education might work at this level.

The teacher – pupil relationship

The findings suggest that the relationship between the teacher and pupils changes with the level of appraising. In fact, it suggests that until the student can talk on a more equal level with the teacher, talk remains at a superficial level. This is suggested in the teacher interview with Matthew where talk was teacher dominated and where Matthew found it hard to sustain talk about his work. It was evident that a number of factors affected

his ability to talk at a more mature level: the view he had of the teacher as being in control against his shyness or discomfort with the situation of a one-to-one interview about his work, but also his lack of confidence and engagement with his work preventing him talking about it in an affective way, and therefore at a higher level of appraising. As pupils' appraising matures, the findings suggest that the pupils and teacher talk on a more equal level about their work but that until students become involved affectively with their work, allowing them to talk about it confidently, with a sense of ownership, they appear unable to move beyond descriptive responses and shorter replies to teacher questioning. Jason is once again a good example of this confidence in the relationship he has with the teacher. In a lower school whole class context, pupils may tend to see the teacher as someone who judges whether their work is acceptable and therefore the teacher will tend to dominate the talk, which is aimed at improving the work through demonstration and explanation. Here the relationship is very different with the teacher leading and directing the lesson with all the social processes which that also involves.

Figure 5.4 on the next page summarises these ideas:

Fig 5.4 The relationship between appraising and teacher pupil relationships and between appraising and constructivism.

Level	Character	Teacher/pupil relationship	Constructivism
1	Reassurance	Teacher dominated	Teacher acts as facilitator. Pupils bridge 'zone of proximal development' as understanding develops as a result of talk.
2	Descriptive		Teacher's role is important in assisting pupils in their understandings.
3	Opinion		
4	Affective	Becoming more equal in balance of way talk and communicate together.	
5	Evaluative		
6	Problem solving	Teacher and pupil talk on more equal level with pupil feeling ownership of own composing.	Pupils personally construct meanings from own compositions and share and clarify this in talk with others.

Making sense of what we do

In figure 5.4, the role of the teacher in helping children to make sense of what they are doing is highlighted. The learner constructs understandings through making sense of what he or she is doing. The teacher's role in assisting with this process which is at the heart of learning, is to find strategies that allow for meaningful interaction between group participants. The level of teacher input into pupil's work is high in the first three levels of appraising. Pupils are reliant on the teacher for reassurance and advice. At level 2, the findings suggest that work will improve and change as a result of teacher intervention in the talk about that work. Work with group B in Cycle 1 clearly showed this happening as new ideas were readily taken up to improve their piece of music or chant. Vygotsky viewed talk as central to the learning process with the teacher acting as facilitator (Chapter 2). Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' allows learners to move to a new level of understanding. For example, in Cycle 1, Fiona was playing her drum rhythm (tala) in time with one of the other parts. The teacher suggests she should try to find an independent rhythm which fits with the others. Fiona cannot get it right and at first it looks as if it will have to remain as before. Further efforts with the teacher's help pay off and Fiona manages to play a contrasting rhythm with the teacher counting with her. Back in the classroom, Fiona manages to keep an independent rhythm going when her group perform their piece to the class. It is slightly different from their practise but it is nonetheless independent. Fiona has moved her skill learning here a stage further on - it is a difficult idea to cope with and indicates for her a more advanced stage of musical learning. Making sense through the construction of meanings is at the centre of learning and is an essential element in the way pupils improve their work through talking about it. Pupils are constructing ideas, linking them together (musical ideas together with talk) to create understandings. As the level of composing and appraising matures and pupils are able to work more independently, the teacher's role is less dominant but continues to encourage and provide assurance.

Further Reflection on the Findings of Cycle 2

In Cycle 2, the findings suggest that developmental hierarchical stages are to be found in the process of appraising pupils' own work. The progression suggested here is not age-related, rather it appears to relate to some degree to maturity in engagement with the music. The more confident a person becomes with their composing, the greater feeling of ownership exists and in turn they can talk confidently about the meanings that they have constructed in relation to their work. These will not necessarily coincide with the meanings others place on this work as listeners. Their confidence and personal satisfaction allows them to confront the teacher as the 'expert' in relation to their own work. At earlier stages pupils rely heavily on the teacher to help them to construct their meanings in trying to understand concepts. It is likely at this level that they are composing a prescribed task so the teacher is always here 'the expert' and 'judge of quality'. This places the learner in a very different situation with their need to seek reassurance that their understandings and musical output are valid and worthwhile. At this stage they are able to describe their understandings and their composed pieces in relation to the task set and may be able with increasing confidence to express an affective engagement with their music. The ability to evaluate their work critically and to view it objectively, with a willingness to reflect, revise and refine, is likely to be characteristic of those who are composing a substantial enough piece to be able to have ownership and pride in their work. The stages indicated in Fig 5.4, of pupils' ability to appraise their own work can be continually re-visited. A sixth form student may be able to reach a level of evaluative, problem solving in the appraisals but faced with evaluating their work a first year undergraduate, coming to terms with new principles and ideas may find themselves once more seeking re-assurance in a new context.

The ability to evaluate independently with confidence at these 'higher' stages of appraisal relates closely to a student's understanding of the musical concepts and principles involved in the composing task. At the more basic descriptive and opinion levels, students may still be negotiating

understandings through their talk with the teacher. By the evaluative, problem-solving stage, the student has become 'the expert' in the way he or she has transformed their understanding of the processes into their own composition.

Glover (2000) views the role of teaching as helping pupils to become more aware of the processes they use (See chapter 2, p15). Burnard (2000) also emphasises the need for children to understand the *processes* of composing. Talk, she suggests, helps to reflect on these processes and to clarify understandings. The stages of talk identified in this research support the ideas that appraisal of work allows pupils to gain confidence and to clarify their understandings of the processes involved in composing. These skills in turn allow students to gain an increasing confidence in their own ability to compose.

In chapter 2 I discussed the tension between understanding music as a feeling, emotional response and of understanding music as an informed listener who can apply structural and musical conceptual understandings to what they hear. As composers, it was suggested, relevant conceptual understanding as well as a knowledge of structural ideas may help the composer to shape their work. In contrast, the listener of music may receive a 'gut response' when listening to a piece of music which, at an affective level relies on accepting what we hear at face value. This response to the music heard may be no less valid as an affective response than that 'received' by an informed listener, but does this apply for the composer? Can the composer invent music without technical knowledge, without an awareness of conceptual structural principles?

Most school curriculum schemes of work revolve around pupils learning the musical principles needed for a greater understanding and more informed view of hearing, performing or composing music. The appraisal of composing work by children assists in this process of coming to know or understand what they are doing in relation to musical structures and concepts. If we do not need these understandings or if we are able to

compose purely affectively, then what teachers do in music classrooms is largely irrelevant.

The idea suggested here is, that as musical terminology and conceptual understanding increases, and as pupils become increasingly confident in their composing, so their ability to talk about their work also displays a growing knowledge of their understandings. If as Mellor suggests, (Mellor, 1999, see chapter 2, p13) appraising music composed 'intuitively' rather than in relation to musical terminology, is encouraging creative, emotional and affective responses, then the stages of appraising suggested here would look very different. These stages are based on findings which were in turn based on lessons where there is a commitment to teaching children musical conceptual and structural principles. The results will inevitably therefore reflect this. Mellor was concerned with a loss of affective responses to music when too much concentration is placed by teachers on 'musical elements' and the dissection of music into its component parts. Effective appraising, as suggested here, relies on affective engagement with the music. Talk stays at a basic descriptive level if affective responses are not involved but these findings support the idea that there needs to be a balance between affective response to music and conceptual understanding.

CHAPTER 6 : CYCLE 3

Introduction

Cycle 1 provided evidence of the first and second levels of appraising (reassurance and descriptive levels – See Fig 5.2, p87, Appraising Typology) and Cycle 2 data provided evidence of descriptive and opinion statements by pupils in their work. In the one-to-one interviews with GCSE pupils, there was evidence of affective responses and evaluative judgements. Most of this latter data was based on the work of one pupil, Jason. The findings suggested that in order to reach the higher levels of appraising, the students need to engage affectively with their own composition work. They need to feel confident and enthusiastic about what they have composed. Much of the work observed in lower school lessons involved pupils who were perhaps not taking ‘ownership’ of their group piece. This might be especially true of Roger, Nick and Emily in group A. At the lower school level there may also be a temptation to treat tasks set more like exercises to be completed in a set time rather than a composition which the pupil needs to feel proud of. This is a problem caused by the fact that class sessions are conducted with large numbers of pupils and less than adequate instruments to compose and perform music with. This detachment from the work will inevitably affect the level of a pupil’s engagement with the process.

This study is about reflecting on practice. The quality of talk observed at the affective and evaluative levels is very ‘rich’ in quality in the development of pupils’ critical thinking skills. Pupils at these higher levels of appraising are engaging in self-reflection or self-evaluation of their work. They have a good command of musical terminology and their vocabulary suggests that they have a conceptual understanding that allows them to relate their talk to structural issues as well as discussion of imagery or representations in the music (Jason’s work as reviewed in chapter 5, also see transcript of interview in Appendix 4). Swanwick (1994) sees reflective discourse about music leading to new insights in the process of extrinsic analysis of music (See Chapter 2). He believes that this reflective discourse lies at the heart of music education in the future. He does not however discuss how this should be achieved in the classroom. It is hoped that the findings of this research

study will suggest further examples of reflective discourse at the analytical, problem solving levels of appraising. At the present time however, further evidence is needed to support the idea that pupils need to feel affective engagement with their work in order to reach higher levels of appraising. Is it possible to achieve 'affective engagement' with lower school pupils or is this simply a developed skill? Is the typology hierarchical in age-related development so that the problem solving level is only attainable by older, A level or higher education, composing students or can younger pupils engage in problem solving talk about their work? In order to encourage students to engage more closely and personally with their work they need to be provided with a learning context where group interaction allows for a greater analysis of their composing. In Cycle 3, pupils work in small groups to prepare their composing task as before but when nearing completion, pupils will join with another group to demonstrate and discuss each others' work together. The teacher's role here will be as an observer. Pupils will be expected to negotiate their own organisation of how the two groups will present and discuss their work together.

The relationship between the changes in teaching strategy and the research process.

This action research project is not collaborative. The teacher, who is also the researcher engages with the research process on paper rather than with other teachers in order to change teaching strategies. It could be argued that changes in teaching strategy are motivated by the research process itself. There is a fine line between the motivations of the research in deciding what will be the next teaching strategy change and whether this will serve the purposes of the research adequately. Clearly, in action research it is the former which must always take precedence and which must be the course of action. Here the reflective practice of the teacher/researcher interacts with the research process to enable and to encourage teaching changes to be made. In deciding the next cycle in the action research model, my question must be: how can my teaching strategies be changed to enable even more effective group 'talk' to take place? If I was led by research strategies rather than teaching strategies, I might ask; how can I further test out whether group or individual 'talk' is most effective? What research strategies will

provide the information I need? The action research framework determines that it must be the teaching strategies which are the focus of action here.

A Single Hypothesis for Cycle 3

As with cycle 2, a further hypothesis is put forward which can be tested in the next cycle's action steps (See Fig 3.1, p36). In cycle 3, new classroom learning strategies will investigate the following hypothesis:

Children in groups of 4 to 6 pupils will appraise each others' work to ascertain if, when explaining their work to others, without the teacher present, they might demonstrate greater engagement with their composing work.

A Revised General Plan

The new teaching strategy explored in Cycle 3 aims to give year 7 pupils the opportunity to demonstrate and perform their completed composition to another group and to encourage them to talk to each other about it without the teacher being present. The same teaching methods were adopted in three year 7 classes (children aged 12) and two groups from each class were chosen to be video recorded in pairs in order to demonstrate and appraise their pieces. No guidelines were given about the nature of the appraising. All pupils have engaged in oral class appraising and all pupils regularly write evaluations of their practical work.

The Task

Pupils listen to 'Danse Macabre' by Saint Saens and learn about the story of the music. Pupils discuss whether they think it sounds 'spooky' or not. They then relate the music to the television series, 'Jonathan Creek' which uses this theme as a signature tune. Pupils discuss why the music is used for the programme. After suggesting themes and ideas for composing their own 'spooky' pieces of music in groups using available classroom tuned and untuned percussion instruments, groups are sent to work on their pieces. The teacher moves from group to group offering encouragement and suggestions. The following week pupils review what they are doing and

further work resumes. Pupils are told that during the lesson today they will be expected to play their composition to one other group and to discuss their work with the members of that group. All pupils in the class follow the same procedures but two groups are asked if they agree to be video-recorded demonstrating their work to each other and talking to each other about it.

Group E – Class 1

Imogen, Joanne, Natasha and Stephanie demonstrate a piece with an original story about burglars getting into a house at midnight, walking across the floor, hearing a tap dripping, walking up the stairs, hearing a creaking door, the door slams and the door bell rings. There is a chase, a scream, someone is putting chains on the burglar, there is a gun shot. The music is well organised and the girls demonstrate what is happening in their music by playing it again and annotating it as they go along. The only other question asked relates to the story rather than to the music. “Why would she put chains on him?” was the question, “Because they are in America.” The story is imaginative and dramatic. It has plenty of scope for musical representation with steps, dripping tap, chimes, creaks etc. The appraising is descriptive but representational of the story. They organise the performance and the subsequent talk well. They are very involved with the whole process and display real engagement with the task. The other group do not try to ask many questions. Group E take responsibility for controlling the appraising as well as the performance.

Group F – Class 1

Rebecca, Lucy and Vikas demonstrate their piece. They announce that it is called ‘The Owl Knows All’. The owl is played using a pupils’ own Ocarina which has presumably inspired the ‘owl idea’. Using a drum, a keyboard, a xylophone, a triangle and an ocarina the group go through their piece. They then assume the same procedure as group E and they go through it explaining that they are in the woods and a man is following a girl, the owl has seen it all and there is a chase. It ends with a scream as she is killed. They are very absorbed in their work. The talk is very descriptive and they appear totally unaware of the presence of the video. At this point the teacher enters which cuts short any further possible conversations that may have

been offered. There is a silence and the teacher takes over control of the dialogue.

Teacher Have you finished talking about it?

Pupils Yes

Teacher Did you find it useful to play to another group and to talk to them or would you have preferred to play to the whole class?
Imogen?

Imogen Yes, it's good but I like playing to the class

Teacher What are the advantages of just playing to one other group?

Joanne If you make a mistake – not the whole class hears it.

Teacher It's not so scary is it? – that's right. Did they go well?

Joanne Yes.

Group G – Class 2

Anna, Emily (from Group A), Tiffany, Eve, Lois and Claire are still working on their piece when the other group H are brought in by the teacher. There is some argument between the girls of Group G. Emily keeps shouting 'shut up' and tells Anna to 'stop bossing'. They play their piece. Anna plays chords on the piano accompanied by glissandos on the xylophone. We hear twelve chimes on the triangle and a drum joins in on the off beats. Piano chords heighten the atmosphere while the drum, glockenspiel and xylophone play rapid notes. They break down and start again arguing about what should have happened and who went wrong. This time they get through the whole piece. One of the other group suggests, 'tell us the story.' This is a larger group of six girls so there is more co-ordination needed and there are some strong personalities with Anna (from group A) still taking on the role of leader very strongly. The boys of group H sit quietly and make little attempt to intervene despite the frustration of having to sit through two attempts of the piece by the girls. The music itself is good and mirrors the 'Danse Macabre' story. The boys try to ask questions, "Don't you think it a bit strange with them all playing at different times?" and, "What was the xylophones all about?", but the answers are inaudible against the chattering of the girls.

Group H – Class 2

Nick, Roger (from Group A), Sean and Chris begin their spooky piece. Nick plays a 'Death march' (he explains later) on the piano accompanied by a drum. Piano chords are followed by twelve chimes on the triangle. Nick plays a 'jaws-like' theme low down on the piano accompanied by tremelo triangle, xylophone and tambourine. The drum ends the piece. Again the piece is well controlled and organised. Everyone is totally engaged with the music. The story follows the 'Danse Macabre' idea again with some imaginative ideas on the piano. After describing what happened the girls try to ask questions about the tambourine part and the xylophones but the boys take it as criticism and arguments ensue making the comments inaudible. At this point the teacher enters.

Group J – Class 3

Mary, Hannah, Laura and Amy play a very short piece with a catchy downward walking bassline on the piano. This group ask the others to guess what the story is about.

"I think it was someone walking along."

Mary says, "Yes" and sings her piano bassline.

"Something happened at the end...it was sort of like there's someone walking along and then all of a sudden someone grabs them, or something like that....."

Later Hannah asks, "What could we have improved?"

Someone replies, "I think the chimes could have been a lot slower."

Hannah then asks, "Do you think we should have more instruments?"

The music here is short but it is more representational than telling a story. There is a story attached but it is not as obvious. The music gives an atmosphere and in this respect is a more mature representation of the task. This is more akin to what composers do. They do not provide sound effects. The dialogue here is much more the focus of what this group are doing here and they do not display the urgency to move on to the next group's performance. Unfortunately at this point, the video tape stopped and so the rest of the dialogue and group K's performance was lost.

Findings

Technical Questions

The pupils had been encouraged by the teacher to ask each other questions about their work and a number of types of questions began to emerge from the data. Some of the questions here related to aspects of technique. One for example, “Why did you choose to use a triangle for the chimes?”. This is a simple technical question but it has representational implications. In the first two groups, Vikas, a boy plays a number of adjacent notes together on a keyboard to produce a spooky, scary loud sound. One of the girls asks, “Do you actually know what notes you’re going to play on that keyboard?”, to which he replies, “No!” Group E have put screaming into their piece and group F asks if they had copied their piece from the demonstrations last week when group F had used a scream. These are technical questions at a descriptive level of appraising. Group H boys wanted to know what the xylophone was doing in the girls’ group G piece. They replied that it represented skeletons. This might have been a purely technical question but the answer related it to one of representation of the music. Simple technical questions can also be evaluative in nature. They are seeking to find out why something is presented in a certain way. The fact that they are being asked is the pupils’ way of exploring the situation here. They are basic explorations into evaluative areas of discussion. To ask such questions the pupils have to be engaging affectively with the music as an audience member (since it is not their composition). It is low-level critical analysis of the situation. The pupils seek to find an answer to a ‘why?’ question.

Representational questions

Questions relating to the way the music represented their own stories were in the majority in this cycle of the research. The nature of the task often determines the nature of the appraising. Because pupils were asked to compose a ‘sound picture’, a representation of an idea in musical sounds, (not sound effects necessarily) then this type of question will inevitably predominate. Group E decided to do an annotated version of their original presentation for their partner group F. This occurred because group F asked, “What is it about?”

“this is the chimes of the clock, like 12 o’clock”

“that’s the window smashing”

“they’re walking across the floor and the tap is dripping”

“that’s the door opening and it creaks”

“and that’s a bang ‘cos he’s (the burglar) dropped something”

These are some of the explanations given by this group to demonstrate their representation in music. The nature of the annotation is representational of the story in a very literal way. It is descriptive and the music acts almost like sound effects rather than pure music. Group E are working at a descriptive level in their explanation of their piece. They are engaging with their work but they appear to be communicating more with the story than with the musical representation of the story.

Another group who treat the story and music in a similar way is their partner group F. Their piece called, ‘The owl who knows’, tells a story about a man following a girl in a wood. The owl is represented on an ocarina. Their explanation of their story is also an annotated presentation. The boy’s group, group H also tell the story and explain with musical effects. Their story is similar to the ‘Danse Macabre’ story presented by the teacher at the beginning of the lesson. Annotated presentations, then, appear to be largely at a descriptive level with affective engagement relating to the story in particular, while the music provides a musical representation of it.

Questions about affect

Explicit questions about affect are few in this dialogue. However, the engagement with the story and its representation in music is intense by all those involved. They do not say, “that feels spooky”, or “you created a really spooky atmosphere in that piece”, but there is obvious admiration for some of the pieces. The boy’s in group H gained some very complementary comments from group G.

“Very nice”

“that was wonderful”

These statements were not qualified. They were two very noisy, disorganised groups and the talk then moved quickly onto the boy's explanation of their piece.

Group J asks, "was it spooky?"

Group K reply, "yes", without qualification again.

The whole task involved affective engagement with the story in order to represent it in music.

One interesting outcome of the 'spooky' theme was their use of musical clichés. Vikas used a discord on the keyboard (like a church organ sound) to create a spooky, scary sound. Group G used a bass line which is frequently heard when music is scary or spooky. Group H played a 'Death March' theme and later a type of 'Jaws' theme on the piano.

One could question here whether the category of 'affective responses' is placed too high in the typology (See Fig 5.2,p87). The affective engagement is largely due to the storyline but the pupils' representations of these stories demonstrates that they are fully engaged in their musical compositions. Why then does the talk not reach the same level of engagement? Is there a case for considering the extent that something is expressed in music but not yet achieved in dialogue. This will be discussed further in the next section.

Evaluation/Problem Solving questions

Group J adopted a different approach to their discussion about their story and its musical representation. They asked group K to guess what the story was about.

"I think it was someone walking along"

"Yes"

"It was midnight, wasn't it?"

"Something happened at the end"

"It sort of like there's someone walking along and then all of a sudden someone grabs them, or something like that?"

This part of the discussion consisted of descriptive statements about the music but because they were involved in ‘guessing’ it had a different dimension – it involved evaluating the music to seek out the story, it involved imagery, it involved engaging closely with the music as an audience member. It involved forming some kind of analysis. It had the ingredients of a more mature problem solving and evaluative dialogue.

Questions then followed which asked group K:

“What could we (group J) have improved?”

Their replies were helpful and constructive.

“I think the chimes could have been a lot slower”

There was no follow up to this statement unfortunately. Anna continued by asking,

“Do you think we should have more instruments?”

Group K persisted with talk about the chime

“It was low for a chime”

“It was the chime of a clock, like in a haunted house. More of a tune”.

The dialogue here was quite prolonged and extended. Their exploration of ideas to be improved was evaluative. There is engagement with their composing work and there is confidence in their work also. They are aware of their intentions and they appear to have realised them in the finished piece. This group attempted to identify problems and they were using group processes of their own devising to negotiate solutions. They are working totally independently of the teacher and have constructed their own way of managing the presentation. The talk of these two groups are significant in demonstrating that higher levels of appraising are possible with younger

pupils when the context is right. The context requires a questioning opportunity, with audience members who are not part of the performing group. The task set needs to be one which children of this age can relate to easily, such as a story which can be represented in musical sounds. Audience members need to be encouraged to ask questions of the other performing group without teacher intervention, in order to clarify for them what is happening in the piece of music. To some extent this implies that the teacher needs to set up a problem solving activity and a problem solving context for audience talk.

What is clear in all the group appraising in Cycle 3, is that the quality of talk is more advanced than that achieved in Cycles 1 and 2. The learning strategy and the imaginative task that was set up here by the teacher has enabled younger pupils to explore elements of affective, evaluative and problem solving appraising levels. The findings of this research has clear implications for teacher organisation of classroom tasks if musical criticism and analysis skills are to be encouraged alongside composing work in the classroom. Fig. 6.1 shows a summary of the way different types of questions relate to levels of appraising.

Fig. 6.1 – Types of questions in relation to types of appraising

Types of questions	Descriptive appraising	Affective appraising	Evaluative/problem solving appraising
Technical	“Why did you use a triangle for...?” “Do you know what notes you play for that chord?” “What was the xylophone doing?”		Technical questions which ask why something is played in a certain way.
Representational – the extent to which the music depicts the words or text- descriptive	“This sound is the chimes” “this is the window smashing” ← descriptive and	The questions relate to the music in an affective manner. affective →	
Representational – questions about affect	Complimentary comments mostly unqualified with criterion or reasons. →	musical clichés in sound	
Representational – questions which are evaluative		← ←	Guessing the meaning of the music is affective as well as evaluative. Questions about improving the work – evaluative suggestions.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of Cycle 3 provided evidence complementary to that of Cycle 2, that younger pupils can be encouraged to talk about their composing work using some elements of affective, evaluative and problem solving appraising levels (See fig 5.2, page 84). The data suggested that younger lower school pupils were capable of making evaluative comments when they asked about problems encountered in their compositions (group J and K) and targeted how they might improve their work (a problem solving skill). Their work demonstrated that groups were able to engage affectively with their piece of music, get involved with it and take ownership of it. Here the task is one which is likely to produce imaginative responses allowing pupils to 'tell a story' in sound. None of their evaluative or problem solving dialogue was extensive or fully developed but the pupils were tentatively exploring higher, more mature levels of appraising. Observation of the video tape recordings confirms that the pupils were much more eager to talk giving extended answers when the questions were asked by peers rather than in earlier data when the teacher asked similar questions. The task set here by the teacher did not require pupils necessarily to have developed conceptual knowledge or related musical knowledge since the focus was on representation of a story in music. The maturity of understanding here is demonstrated when pupils are able to move away from providing a series of sound effects to a more abstract representation. However, at this age of 11 to 12 years, it would not necessarily be expected that pupils would be capable of abstract representation.

The issue raised here is whether children's thinking about and understanding of the music is more complex than their talk about it, as manifest in their musical output, here their more abstract representation of a mysterious night. This highlights one of the research questions and links with research by Barrett (1996) and Davies (1992) who observed that children as young as five years are capable of aesthetic decision-making as evidenced in the way they use form and structure in their composing but that they were unable to explain this. One suggestion is that children's capacity to talk about what they understand is far more limited than the understandings which are demonstrated in their music (See chapter 2).

Constructivist learning

The organisation of pupil learning by the teacher encourages pupils here to engage in making sense of the task given and in constructing their own ideas and representations through working together as a team. Glaserfeld (1995) (See Chapter 2) viewed constructivism as an experiential form of thinking, through ideas and concept building and through ‘doing’. In order to gain knowledge, for Glaserfeld, it has to be experienced. Music group work in the classroom fulfils this idea. Concepts are explored experientially in different ways using a variety of grouping and media (classroom instruments and music technology). Pupils then listen to composed music to identify these concepts at work. Through their practical exploration, they have built up understandings. Appraising in the classroom helps pupils to talk and make sense of the concepts which have been explored both practically and through discrimination. In Cycle 3, pupils were operating in a problem solving, meaning making context in most of the groups. For example, groups J and K are asking each other questions about their performances. They ask the other group what could be improved? “I think the chimes could have been slower”, says one pupil. Anna asks if they should have had more instruments involved in the piece and then others suggest other instruments and what they might have represented in the story. While no ‘leaps’ into new understandings are indicated here, the level of the discussion, totally initiated by themselves, is a learning experience in itself for many in these two groups. Children are, independently of the teacher, together constructing meanings about the work they are exploring.

There are however, situations where other issues impinge on successful constructive learning. Groups G (girls) and H (boys) included all the pupils from the earlier group A. The learning was minimal in group G and H’s presentations and discussion, because groups G’s performance stopped before the end and their repeat performance annoyed the boys. All their discussions after this were conducted as shouting with more than one person talking at once. Anna here also attempted to take a dominant, organising role but Nick and Roger were very argumentative and clearly annoyed with

her role even though this time they were in a different group. The group dynamics prevented constructive learning from taking place.

Group Dynamics

The six groups were friendship groups and all but one were single sex groups (girls). Only one group here was a male group (group H) and one was made up of two girls and one boy (group F). It is interesting to note that as in Cycle 2, the problems with group dynamics occurred when a girl's group was paired with a boy's group. Unfortunately however, the pupils in this cycle also include those who found agreement difficult previously and the problem of Anna's dominant character is also present here. Further to this, I suspect that there were remembered problems here from the previous occurrence that only served to aggravate the situation. The other group where Vikas worked with two girls was without problem. He was quite dominant in presenting the dialogue of that group and the two girls seemed happy with this. This group as well as being made up of both girls and a boy also represented a rare multi-cultural mix for this school. Vikas, an Asian boy is working here with two white girls. The selection of more girls to take part in this research than boys is evident. All the research was carried out in an adjacent practice room and although this is a normal procedure, only those who can be trusted to work well can be allowed to work out of sight of the teacher's constant view. Behavioural issues are one reason why many boys in particular are not able to work in the practice rooms. Their often less mature approach to the work prevents the teacher being able to allow them to work unsupervised. The teacher is well aware that this compounds the issues of gender further, and can cause them to be resentful of not being allowed to work in adjacent areas, but the teacher feels that safety issues have to also be considered above all others.

One issue that was not reported in the findings was that of the pupils' need for teacher awareness of their work products. In each of the three paired groups, the teacher intervened near the end of each session and asked whether they had found the process useful, to present work to each other and to talk about it and whether they would prefer to play it to the whole class or the teacher.

“if you make a mistake – not the whole class hears it” (group E)

“You’ll probably do better in a small group ‘cause not everyone’s watching.”(group H)

These comments suggest that pupils find it less threatening performing to smaller groups but group G and also group E and F suggested that they wanted the teacher to hear them. This suggests that pupils need to have feedback or the knowledge that the teacher has heard their work.

A summary of issues raised in cycle 3

Cycle 3’s new teaching strategy resulted in some extensive ‘rich’ talk when pupils demonstrated their composing to another group and they questioned each other about it. Evaluative questions were asked and there was evidence of affective engagement with the composition and attempts at problem solving. Further to this, it has been suggested that sometimes (as in the case of group J) the music suggests that a greater understanding of some musical concepts is displayed than is evident in the talk. The findings here also suggest that the teacher can encourage higher levels of appraising such as evaluative questioning, by carefully considering the topic of composition. One way of doing this is by choosing a task which engages their imaginative interest and allows for representation of the idea in music. For such a self-motivated and pupil organised task, groups need good organisational skills and also good relationships. Groups who cannot work well without the teacher present are unlikely to achieve very much in demonstrating their work to another group and appraising it. (The experience of Group G and H suggested that it is not only badly behaved groups who will not find the task productive.) The remaining groups in the class might follow the same procedures with the teacher present and with further groups listening in as an audience. The tasks set here when successfully conducted are examples of reflective practice in a constructive learning environment. Pupils expressed a need to have the teacher hear and see their work. Regular work of this kind would leave pupils dissatisfied with the process unless the video

recorder was used and the outcome discussed in the next lesson with the teacher.

CHAPTER 7 : CONCLUSIONS

The Research Questions

The National Curriculum Orders 2000 (DFEE, 1999), were published as this research project was nearing completion. Appraising appeared, in this new version of the Music Curriculum, to be more explicitly defined and leaving teachers with less uncertainty about how to integrate appraising activities into their teaching. Appraising skills are identified in the new orders as ‘responding and reviewing’ which at Key Stage 3 (children aged 11 –14 years) is demonstrated when pupils are taught how to, “analyse, evaluate and compare pieces of music....communicate ideas and feelings about music using expressive language and musical vocabulary to justify their own opinions....(and to) adapt their own musical ideas and refine and improve their own and others’ work” (A detailed analysis of the orders are given in Major, 2000). This research study looks at the particular area of appraising as talk and the development of critical, reflective thinking.

This study found that pupils engage in appraising when they demonstrate their compositions to others, when they listen to others' compositions and to the talk of others, particularly when there is also feedback from the teacher, indicating where work is fulfilling the required criteria. They are appraising also when they provide constructive criticism of others' work. Improving their own composition as a result of hearing others' work, can also be seen as appraising. The findings of this study have demonstrated that creating the classroom conditions for this to happen effectively for all pupils is demanding. In whole class appraising the teacher tends to dominate not only the talk but also the direction in which the lesson progresses through control of the dialogue. Pupils’ responses here remain at a superficial level and are, in many cases, single word answers. (See chapter 4) The musical progress in such lessons however, is more productive. Through demonstration and talk, the teacher can provide instant feedback to pupils which acts as guidelines for other groups who are observing. The quality of the talk when pupils work together with the teacher acting as an observer, is often more developed in quality but can lack focus when the teacher does not intervene to suggest a strategy for improved work. (See chapter 5, group A) More

constructive and evaluative talk with younger pupils was observed when two groups discussed with each other. Here the dialogue in one group was both affective (the children engaged with their compositions) and evaluative (the children looked for reasons 'why?') (See chapter 6, groups J and K), but in another group, (G and H) appraising was totally unproductive (See Chapter 6).

The appraising articulated in the new National Curriculum for music, (DFEE,1999) is wholly in keeping with the findings of this research project. "In communicating ideas and feelings about music", (DFEE, 1999) the findings in this project suggest that the quality of talk engaged in when children work together without teacher intervention, is rich in developing pupils' critical thinking skills. They engage in self-evaluation and use musical terminology (See Chapter 5). In Cycle 3 findings, pupils were found to conduct conversations that were focused and which at best provoked some useful questions. Pupils shared ideas about their work in reflective practice (See Chapter 6). "In adapting their own musical ideas, refining and improving their own and others' work". (DFEE, 1999) A number of findings from this research project provide examples of improvements to work in progress resulting from oral appraising with the teacher or whole class. The case of Fiona is given as an example in Cycle 1 (See chapter 4).

The distinctive characteristics of appraising when children talk about their own and others' music composing work in process, as suggested by the findings of this study are that children talk most readily in a descriptive way about their work. Teachers will ask, "Can you tell me what you are doing?". More evaluative comments tend to be in evidence when children engage more affectively with their own work. Often children in the lower Secondary School age group tend to treat music tasks as exercises. It is often only when individual composing takes over at GCSE level, that pupils appear to take more ownership of their work (see Cycle 2). At this level then, some pupils begin to talk in evaluative ways about the reasons why they decided to compose in the way they did. At an earlier age, in Cycle 3, it was discovered, children are capable of evaluative comments and of problem solving responses and it may be that their understanding of what they do and

the way they make sense of their compositions is far in advance of their ability to verbalise their ideas.

Is then, children's thinking about and understanding of the music more complex than their music making? The evidence in Cycle 1's whole class work did suggest that pupils understood the concepts when playing their raga pieces. Music played here contained evident understanding of repetitive drones and the improvisory nature of raga melodies. Barrett (1996) argues that, "whilst the development of the capacity to talk of music.....is an important aspect of music education, such a capacity should not be viewed as the only expression of aesthetic thinking....(and that) children may 'demonstrate' rather than 'state' their aesthetic thinking through their musical discourse as composers" (p58). This was confirmed in the research. *In Cycle 3, some of the pupils were able to engage in evaluative dialogue.* The comments made were short and the pupils did not attempt to develop these ideas. It could be concluded that, because the quality of their music in representing a mood rather than a story with sound effects was so mature, their understanding is greater than revealed through their talk. A further example in the findings of Cycle 2 is Matthew who as an able GCSE music student, discusses his work at a level requiring reassurance, the most basic level of appraising. He is unable to talk extensively yet he possesses a much greater knowledge of musical vocabulary and concepts than he is able to demonstrate in his discussion. Is it possible that his thinking is far more mature than that suggested by his discourse? Matthew's case is an interesting one (see chapter 5).

Conversely, can we learn about children's understanding of the music through their talk? When children are given a practical musical task, they have to make sense of what they are required to do. Many tasks will require the understanding of concepts or musical structures in order to progress, as well as the creative skills to enable them to produce a piece of music. In practical tasks, if something is not understood then no meaningful progress can be made. Questions have to be asked of each other to clarify what the task involves. Children are making sense of what they are doing through talking to each other. The performance of their work informs the teacher whether they understand or not. In Seb's piece, it was evident that his

improvisation was a repeated tune just like his drone. Appraising helped to clarify a misunderstanding. The teacher knew this from listening to the music (See chap 4). Social reflection on the task allows children to make sense of what they do.

Throughout this research study there has been a tension between whether it is necessary to acquire musical vocabulary in order to understand the music or whether intuitive responses to music are not just as valid. The discussion 'leans' towards the need for musical vocabulary, understanding of musical structures and conceptual ideas. This is likely to be the 'teacher' response if music education is to be sustained. If intuitive responses to music are seen to be more valuable aesthetically, then educating for musical appreciation is unnecessary and probably harmful. The suggestions in the research are that intuitive responses when listening to music are important but that for the purposes of composition, musical structures, concepts and devices need to be focussed upon. Children can then shape their pieces in order to encourage work to develop and mature and that as composing skills develop alongside listening skills, a musical vocabulary will inform the listening. Green (1999), was quoted (chapter 2) as saying that enjoyment and understanding occurs when links are made between affective, cognitive and extra musical events. In Cycle 3, children had to represent a story in a musical way. An affective engagement with the theme was essential and musical responses were heard in the form of a 'death march' on the piano, eerie glissando sounds on the xylophone and owls hooting on the ocarina. At the same time all pieces heard were structured into sections and the story in this case led the cognitive thinking about structural ideas. Finally, in this task the representation of an extra musical idea provided the fusion between the affective response and the cognitive thinking. As was pointed out in chapter 5, the research was executed in a context of musical learning which includes the assumption that musical vocabulary, concepts and structures should be explored practically in music making and consolidated through talk and demonstration. Since this is the case then, the research can only evaluate responses in this context. Intuitive responses to music or in composing tasks would need to be explored in research where children were not learning musical vocabulary and specific targeted conceptual learning.

The role of the teacher in this research is to nurture the skills of critical analysis. These skills were seen as developmental by both Paynter (1997) and Swanwick (1994) whose stages from sensuous knowing, through intuitive knowing to analytical knowing has been related to the data findings in fig 5.3. In each cycle of the research, the level of teacher intervention varied. The typology (Fig 5.2) indicated that teacher help was necessary at the early stages of talk. Here reassurance and guidance was required. It further suggested that pupils became more independent in their work as they became more effective appraisers. In Cycle 2 there were instances when the teacher's intervention appeared to help pupils to move forward with their work, (see chapter 5) as in the case of group B whereas in group A's work in lesson one, some extra teacher intervention may well have served to add focus to the work in progress here (chap 5). In Cycle 3 however, the teacher intervention is of a different kind. In setting up the lesson and selecting a suitable task for optimum effect, the teacher acts merely as an observer and allows the dialogue to develop unhindered with two groups talking together to unravel the meanings in their compositions. The results were varied with evaluative, problem solving comments evident in talk between groups J and K (See chapter 5). The teacher's role is one of nurturing and guiding. It appears from the findings that it is crucial for the teacher to know what is happening in each group so that intervention can be effective and can promote new learning and help groups to focus on new ideas when necessary. When it is least helpful, is when teachers manipulate the situation or steer the dialogue in a direction that is not the pupil's own. However, the discussion of pupils in whole class appraising was seen to be unproductive in the brief responses by pupils and the domination of the teacher. However, if a part of the appraising process is to acquire musical vocabulary and musical understanding of concepts, then whole class appraising lessons should not be discounted. The teaching that is possible in relation to children's demonstrations of their work in these lessons, as demonstrated in lessons 1 and 2, is valuable. The role of the teacher here is to make connections between children's musical demonstrations of their work and musical concepts and vocabulary. Valuable learning is taking place in these lessons even if the level of talk by the pupils is poor in quality. Vygotsky saw the value of the teacher's role in helping pupils to progress to new levels of understanding through the 'zone of proximal

development' (Britten, 1989). Making connections and helping children to make sense of what they are doing is the main aim of the teaching in whole class lessons.

The issue of product and process talk has been discussed during the research in relation to the findings. Mellor (1999) asks both children and student teachers (2000) in her research to appraise the *product* of the children's composing after they have been audio recorded (see Chapter 2). Ross et al (1993), largely focus on arts' products and only rarely observe conversations with students when their work is still in progress (see chapter 2). Clearly there is a difference in the way the teacher can comment on the work if it is finished. The researcher criticises the teacher in Cycle 1, lesson 2, for being negative about pupils' work in the presence of the whole class when the composition had been finalised and audio recorded. Appraising in process is less threatening because its purpose is to guide and inform about ways in which work can be revised, refined and improved. The differences between process and product appraisal is synonymous with the differences between *formative* and *summative* assessment. In both cases they each serve very different purposes.

The research findings have led to the suggestion that the appraising typology (fig 5.2) has hierarchical implications through maturation rather than being age-related. It is also cumulative since descriptive responses and those requiring reassurance will continue to be present even with 'higher' levels of problem solving and evaluative responses. Swanwick (1994) and Paynter (1997) value the development of critical thinking or critical music perception and both view these developing through various stages from intuitive, through sensory to analytical knowing (see chapter 5). Cognitive thinking is seen to be essential alongside affective response to music heard or composed. My typology here (fig 5.2) sees affective engagement as essential before evaluative or problem solving responses to music can be appreciated. Jason's own interpretations of his symbolic representations in his music marks for him, an affective and personal engagement with the music which allows him to discuss his work in a way which demonstrated his critical, analytical thinking.

Children are presented here in this research as reflective practitioners themselves. For effective appraising, the revising and refining of compositions is an essential process. Talk as reflection is integral to this task. In order to change and alter composing work in process, children need to talk about the options. They need to reflect on what they do not like or what they do not think sounds right. They need to decide how to change their work. This decision-making can take place in a child's head quite quickly or the child might need to talk over the possibilities with a peer or with a teacher. This reflection on their work which can recur a number of times while composing one piece of work, is part of the appraising process. As self-reflective practitioners, the children are looking at their work at every stage and are assessing its potential for the next stage. The teacher is engaging with the pupils in this process in order to promote learning and to encourage improved outcomes.

Reflections on Methodology

Self-reflection is the central theme of this research both for pupils and for the teacher/researcher. In this action research study of reflective practice there are shared observations between teacher and pupils on the meanings of outcomes of lessons, through interview. Through progressive focusing, a number of different learning strategies are explored and evaluated by both teacher/researcher and pupils. The changes which occur in the action research process are those initiated by the teacher/researcher. There is unusually no collective change involved as is normally the case in action research. It is therefore a single researcher's case study where reflection on the researcher's own practice is the central methodology and where the reflective practice of the pupils overlaps with my own reflections. It was noted in chapter 3 that at the end of Cycle 1, it would have been possible to turn this research into a collaborative research project with my colleague and myself working together in the department to explore different ways of engaging in appraising activities. My lack of confidence in my ability to effect this with my colleague caused me to discount this idea and to continue with my research as a solitary teacher/researcher. Elliott (1991) argues that the solitary reflective teacher is blind to reflection about how to change. I have challenged this viewpoint in chapter 3 and argued that as a

solitary researcher, I am challenging my teaching and my ideas about appraising. I would continue to challenge this viewpoint but qualify that the teacher/researcher who is interacting with paper and a research process is not in isolation and therefore should not be considered as solitary.

Elliott (1991) is reported in chapter 3 as saying that action research is reflection on practice with objectives or ends that are continually re-defined and refined in this process of reflection. The reflection should enable teachers to modify their views about what is useful data about practice. In my research it is the classroom settings, the organisation of learning and the ways in which pupils talk about their work that is changed and refined. The research process has reviewed my ideas about appraising from one where I saw myself in control in a class situation, with pupils learning from me and other pupils in order to improve their work, to one where I am not in control of what is said by pupils in small groups but where I still need to have knowledge of what is happening in order to guide pupils who need help. As a result of the research process, I can envisage other organisations of classroom experience which were not explored here but which could be explored in future research or in my future teaching. One alternative scenario might be of small groups demonstrating their composing work to each other, then discussing each performance as a group before appointing one person in each group to report back to the rest of the class their suggestions and findings. The teacher could then use this feedback to introduce other ideas which might further understandings of this topic. This would be a kind of fusion of cycles one and two, explored here.

The interaction of pupils and teachers in shared reflective practice is also a viewpoint which requires challenging. The notion of equal status between teachers and students is rarely if ever possible. The inevitable hierarchical position between the two makes shared reflective practice suspect as a research procedure. In many cases, an outsider researcher would have been able to question the assumptions of lessons which were presented here as indisputable. It was noted in chapter 3 that an outsider, when interviewing the girls of group A in Cycle 2, might have received very different answers when challenging the girls about the lesson. Criticisms of

the lesson topic or content, criticism of the way groups are chosen might have been topics of discussion but here are unquestioned.

The use of video and audio recording equipment for the data collection has allowed me to re-visit the data over a period of three years. A video camera's presence in a lesson will inevitably change the actions and affect the discussion of the participants. In some group work there was an ever present awareness of the camera (group A, Cycle 2, chapter 5). In later group work when two groups were working together there was evident unawareness of the camera and surprise when one group member mentioned the cameras presence. Poor responses by some pupils in whole class appraising (chapter 4) and in some one-to-one interviews which were audio recorded (chapter 5) may be explained by shyness in the presence of the recording equipment. The presence of the video or audio recorders will inevitable affect the research. However, it also allows the researcher to study the body language of pupils in relation to the dialogue and it allows the teacher researcher to be able to report the narrative and who spoke it, so much more accurately. As a participant observer in many of the lessons the video recording was an essential aid to recording the lesson.

The claims of this research are about the nature of appraising in music lessons when children engage in dialogue about composing work. Such claims are *descriptive* in nature. However, claims that suggests that pupils reflecting orally on work in progress might develop skills of understanding and critical analysis, are *evaluative*. Although statements may be given to suggest that this is happening, no conclusive comments can be made in such a short case study. The research would need a more long-term experimental approach to show that appraising contributes to skills of critical analysis. This study is a single case study that is largely descriptive. It demonstrates changes in practice and different ways of organising learning to allow pupils to engage most productively in appraising talk while composing. The reliability therefore of this research is testable by its relevance to teachers at key stage 3 who engage in similar activities. Qualitative research generally has limited evidence of reliability since each situation or context presents a different situation or result. It is hoped that this project might be valuable in its contribution to research alongside other similar studies.

The validity of this research is assessed by how well the findings are supported by the evidence. Although the research attempts to validate findings by triangulation, the interviews which are designed to check perspectives of participants, are weakened by lack of focus on the main issues of the research. For example, when interviewing Lyn in Cycle 1, the teacher researcher fails to focus on the essential weaknesses of the lesson because of their relationship in the department and because Lyn is also doing her colleague a favour by allowing her to observe her lesson for the purposes of the research.

Reflection on the Literature in relation to my research findings

Previous research which is explicitly about music appraising is that of the RAMP project (Flynn & Pratt, 1995) and Mellor (1999) whose work is specifically on the language children use when appraising. Mellor's research found that teachers are stifling the creative, emotional and affective ways of thinking in children by introducing them to technical music terminology (see chapter 2). She criticises music teachers in Secondary Schools for relating all music learning to the acquisition of conceptual ideas (the music elements). She applauds non-music specialist students and children for judging music heard in her research by intuitive, affective responses. Mellor's conclusions are not consistent with most of the research reviewed in this study. Most writers (Glover 2000, Campbell 1998, Hughes 1999), view technical music terms as necessary for understanding and describing music. This research was undertaken in a school whose scheme of work is built around the acquisition of conceptual understanding through practical music making. The 'novice' who might judge music intuitively therefore is not part of this research. The typology however, suggests that the gradual acquisition of terms, concepts and structures is important for the development of appraising skills and that students are unable to develop beyond the stage of 'describing' skills without affective engagement with the music. Cognitive learning and affective responses here are seen as mutually supportive.

Ross' work (1993) began in 1988 and attempted to demonstrate that assessment in arts subjects needs to take account of students' own self-

appraisals of their work and that teachers should take time to sit down and talk with students about their work. Assessment is not a focus of my research though it is acknowledged that appraising and formative assessing are similar processes. Ross was investigating the value of talk in relation to art finished products. Two writers in particular have looked at talking about art *products* (Mellor 1999/2000 and Ross 1993) but most writers refer to appraising as a process of revising and refining work (Glover 2000, Campbell 1998).

Burnard's research (2000a) focuses on helping children to make sense of their composing work through reflective talk. For Burnard, children should talk about what they are doing and to ask, 'what is composing?' Learning through appraising, which encourages children to gain greater conceptual understanding through the use of musical vocabulary, is an approach which is consistent with meaning making or a constructivist approach to learning. Vygotsky's ideas of shared social learning (Britton, 1989) is at the heart of the way that children make sense of what they are doing through their interaction with others. The role of the teacher here is to guide when required. This approach to learning is consistent with the view of learning in Cycle 2 and 3 of this research.

The levels of appraising outlined in the typology (fig 5.2) are cumulative. Barrett (1996) and Davies (1992) warn of fitting children into models. Both suggest that children often know much more than they are capable of putting into words. Swanwick's well known spiral of musical development (1990) is age-related. In contrast, my typology has levels of attainment in appraising that children of any age can achieve. In Cycle 3, there is a suggestion that children of 12 years are capable of higher levels of evaluative responses, even problem solving alongside empathetic engagement with the music. As in Swanwick's spiral, lower levels of my typology are continually re-visited. The typology is also consistent with Swanwick's ideas on the acquisition of critical listening skills where children move from intuitive, through sensory to analytical levels of response. The sensory responses, for Swanwick involves affective 'feeling' responses which move onto more logical analytical knowing as critical perception develops. In a similar way, in my typology of appraising, affective responses are a pre-requisite for analytical appraisal.

The literature on dialogue reported that teachers tended to take control of lessons through their talk with their pupils (Barnes 1976, Edwards and Mercer 1987). The findings here confirm that this tends to happen in whole class appraising for a variety of reasons. One main factor is that of control. If teachers waited for pupils to think about what they need to say, the rest of the class would start talking among themselves. Teachers therefore often intervene to keep control of the lesson. Philips' research (1986) suggested that children communicated better in small groups where they could summon a teacher if required. This is supported in my research where it was found that children talk more openly in small groups without the teacher present.

Implications for my own practice and further research opportunities

The success of two small groups discussing their work together after demonstrations of their compositions to each other, is a method of appraising that I would like to explore further in my teaching practice. Pupils suggested that they needed to be able to perform their work to the teacher, it was revealed, and this would need to be built into the process. For instant results in terms of checking pupils' understanding of the work, and for teaching terminology and reinforcing conceptual learning, whole class appraising, while problematic, still remains an important teaching strategy. Though not productive in terms of developing pupils' skills of criticism and analysis, the 'musical' appraising here in whole class work is the most valuable. (That is the hearing of each others' work to check it is moving in the 'right' direction for the benefit of the pupil.) The teacher researcher's view is that multi-methods of organising appraising are most valuable since each addresses different aspects of learning.

The outcomes of appraising it was found, differed according to the organisation of the class. For the development of critical analysis skills, pupils appeared to gain more experience through group talk or inter-group talk without the teacher present. For the purposes of teaching skills, a whole class approach of listening to work in progress with brief comments made between the teacher and pupils, seems the most appropriate. Discussion

here however will inevitably be teacher led and directed in relation to criteria set at the outset of the task. Teacher talk will also be controlling class discipline in its pace, and in its need to maintain motivation and interest. For this reason pupil comments are likely to be less useful. For evaluative purposes, especially with older pupils, the one-to-one interview is useful if time allows. Appraising is about the musical end products and is self-reflective and evaluative on the part of the pupil and the teacher.

For further development of my research, I would like to explore the higher levels of appraising. It would be interesting to collect further data from GCSE and A level students to be able to further develop the typology (See Fig 5.2) in relation to evaluative and problem solving levels. Different types of discussion could be observed and evaluated. Group discussion or paired pupil dialogue could be audio recorded and analysed. To further my knowledge about lower levels of appraising, written evaluations of work could be analysed and compared with oral responses. At GCSE it would be interesting to discover whether written responses were more evaluative than oral one-to-one interviews. This might provide further information as to why good GCSE pupils such as Matthew and Rachel, who possess sound musical background knowledge evidenced by their performance in listening discrimination, should operate orally at low levels of appraising. In furthering my observation of small groups talking together, researching into small group questioning would allow me to develop the brief typology of questions attempted in Fig 6.1. It would be interesting to investigate what *kinds* of musical tasks lead younger pupils to engage affectively with their work and whether the evaluative questioning evidenced in Cycle 3 could be developed further with time and practise.

One of the weaknesses of the research is the use of sub-groups which were friendship groups. Groups selected often appear to be able musically. All seem able to converse with each other fluently and intelligently. Those selected are not representative of the average pupil. The researcher could argue that in order to investigate discourse, it is necessary to observe pupils who are able to interact well and to work purposefully on the task without supervision. The lack of boys taking part in the research is significant. Further research might investigate whether mixed gender groups are more

likely to argue (as group A did) and whether there is an age relationship here. A possible hypothesis might be to test if boys and girls work together in groups more successfully as they grow older.

Another development of this research would be to carry out the same type of observation in another school as an 'outsider' researcher where responses from pupils in interviews need not therefore be as guarded as they inevitably are here when talking with their teacher. As an alternative in this research, an 'outsider' might have been used to watch the video recordings of the lessons with the sub-group pupils and to interview them without the teacher present. This might also have provided more useful triangulation.

In a previous piece of research I developed a model of musical experience that demonstrated how the interrelation of concept learning, affective musical responses and skill learning (which included communication and creative problem solving skills) are all needed for effective musical experience and learning to take place. (Major, 1996, p190) The types of appraising identified in this present research are dependent on each of these three elements and interact with concept learning, affective responses as well as the obvious skill learning involved. Appraising and its relationship to this type of holistic curriculum would be a valuable area for further research. The holistic music curriculum is a familiar concept to music teachers since the introduction of the National Curriculum. The interrelation of performing, composing, listening and appraising in practical music making, where one area supports another should be the central focus of music lessons at all key stages. Further research might investigate the relationship between the findings here and how the types of responses pupils give when talking about composing as recorded in the typology of appraising, relate to their comments when talking about recorded music of the great composers. There would need to be an analysis of appraising talk when listening to recorded music and a comparison of the findings with those cited in the typology here. This transference of skills is essential from composing work to listening to recorded or live music, if the skill-building referred to in this research is to lead to critical analysis of music heard in general. Appraising live *performances* of pupils' instrumental or vocal pieces could also be an alternative subject of comparative study in levels of

appraising. These findings could also be compared with responses to, and associated appraising of different professionally recorded versions of the same piece. Evaluating the level of oral discussion in relation to performances might reveal some interesting data which could be compared with the findings of this research. In both these projects some consideration might be made of how worthwhile appraising pupils' own work is in relation to the appraisal of recorded music and the ultimate aim to educate informed and critical listeners of tomorrow. The thinking behind appraisal in the classroom is that the skills of appraising and ultimately critical analysis are best tackled in the context of pupils own work. The studies suggested here could test whether this really is the case.

It should not be forgotten that talk, while important, is only one means of appraising. Investigations using other ways of appraising (outlined in Flynn & Pratt, 1995) would open up many possible areas for research particularly at Key stages 1 and 2 where children's dance, movement and/or art work might be explored as responses to music together with an evaluation of the contribution these different types of responses make to the appraising process.

The new National Curriculum (DFEE,1999) suggests that appraising skills should be explored through the expressions of feelings about music using movement and dance as well as through talk. There is much scope for further work in relation to the skills of appraising at a time when its attention is now being highlighted in the new orders. As teachers are faced with the task of translating the orders into practice in the classroom, appraising offers us an exciting challenge in presenting the holistic music curriculum. Appraising links together the performing, composing and listening components of the curriculum and through appraising activities, children are encouraged to make sense of what they learn.

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

APU	Project of the Assessment of Performance Unit
DES	Department of Education and Science
DFE	Department For Education
DFEE	Department For Education and Employment
MWG	Music Working Group [for the National Curriculum]
NCC	National Curriculum Council
ORACLE	Observational Research and Classroom Learning Evaluation Project
RAMP	Research into Applied Musical Perception

APPENDIX TRANSCRIPTION OF VIDEO
1 RECORDING
PRESENT - YEAR 7 LESSON 1- CLASS A

WITHOUT THE
TEACHER

[Emily, Anna, Roger and Nick are working alone in a practise room without the teacher present. A Video camera is running in the corner.]

Roger We only found one with 2 syllables
Nick Etling Broadway, Etling Broadway
Roger You said Etling - so I'll put a 't' in it!
 Etling Broadway.
Anna Emily, put 2 lines for each so that we can
 write the rhythm and the words in
Emily O.K., do I have to put a title?
Anna You're mean't to draw the notes out
 Roger.[Much scuffling and giggling]
Roger I know I'm...I'll chart it.
Nick What?
Anna Emily's drawn the chart out for you because I
 volunteered her.
 [Chanting] Marble Arch, Goldthorpe Road,
Roger Shepherd's Bush, Hammersmith, Oxford
 Circus,
 Etling Broadway, Sudbury Hill, Band.
Anna Seven Sisters, Hyde Park Corner
Roger Epping(in high pitched voice)
 I wish I could do what her does on the tape.
Nick He's got a German accent
Roger He hasn't! (giggling)
Anna What am I saying now?.....(pointing to
 camera)
 You just swore
 Oh thank you Roger
 (general collapse into giggles)
 Emily?
 Work harder
 The thing is now I can't play Frere Jacques on
 the piano 'cos I know how to do it, O.K.
 Can we start with Epping please
 No,no, I knowif we just jot down at
 random these (rhythms) and then we find the
 work that fits it, and put a few rests in, yes,
 say
 we start with 4 quavers and then we do 2
 crotchets and then we do 2 quavers and then
Anna we do a rest and then we do minim. (Emily,

All are looking self
conscious and aware of
video as teacher leaves
room. Anna sits sideways
to the camera and looks at
the others away from the
camera

reference to John Paynter's
rendition of similar piece.

still very aware of presence
of camera at this point.

	who is writing down, mutter...inaudible)	
Anna	OK, right?	
	Lets just jot down some rhythms at random	
Emily	That's number 1 and number 2?	
Anna	No you've got to write down the actual thing down.	
Emily	Fine.	
Roger	Just do it random like, 1 beat, 0 beats whatever.....	
Anna	Yes, just completely.....I know we'll take it in turns in saying one of these.	
Roger	OK	
Anna	OK?	
Roger	Right you start and we'll go clockwise and we'll start with me first.	
Nick	then me!	
Roger	Me, the fly on the wall, then him!	Roger refers to the camera as the 'fly on the wall'.
	(giggles)	
	OK and I'll say?.....	
Anna	and you can say a rest as well if you like.	
Roger	Two quavers....go on, no four quavers	
Emily	Do I have to write quavers?	
Anna	Yes...4 quavers	
	Emily, what are you doing?	
Roger	Fly on the wall can't talk, so its you next....	
Anna	Hang on a second	
	Emily's making a mistake.	
	(arguing ensues)	
Anna	Draw 4 quavers	
Nick	and a thing coming down	
Emily	Can't I just write 1, 2,3 or 4?	referring to the different possible rhythms from each column. 1 is minim, 2 is two crotchets, 3 is two quavers and a crotchet or a crotchet and two quavers, and 4 is four quavers.
Anna	Right thats 1, that's 2, that's 3 and that's 4.	
	Right have you written 4 (that's 4 quavers)	
	OK, I'll say 'rest'	
Nick	It's me - isn't it?	
Emily	No its not you, its me!	
Anna	You can do each one	
Roger	Are you sure you want 0 beats there?	
	Because, if you have like... Oxford circus____, you need something else.	
Nick	Oxford Circus_____	
Roger	Oxford Service, Queensway.	
Nick	Service...Circus!	
Roger	Circus, sorry.	
	You want something with 2 beats.	
Anna	2 beats.	
Roger	OK, that'll sound better, won't it?	
Anna	All agree	

Roger/Nick Oxford Circus, Queensway
Emily 3
Nick 1
1
Hang on, 3 into 1 don't go!
Anna Well it doesn't matter, we'll do it like this
Nick (ignoring Anna) Marble Arch, Band (ie 3 + 1)
...it does.
Anna No, its OK, we'll change.....
Emily Marble Arch (interrupts)
Nick Marble (all talk at once)
Anna Come on, we've only 10 minutes. (Anna is getting cross)
Roger Have we? a-a-a-h
Anna Yes we have
Nick 3
Emily 3
Nick Does it matter? 2 of those before _____
Roger OK a 5 minute break everyone.
(in high voice)
Circus, Queensway, Goldthorpe Road,
Shepherd's Bush, Epping.
Anna Roger, your go and we've only got 10
Emily minutes.
Anna OK....I'll have.... (addressing Roger)
I'd swot you if there wasn't a camera there
Roger (giggles)
Emily Our friend on the wall
Anna 2 beats, 2 beats, 2 beats
OK, 4
Roger (All talking at once)
We'll need to see how it's going to sound.
Nick We'll want to change some things round.
Anna1,1
Emily No we can, we are allowed to repeat words
Bank, Bank
Nick (giggles) Bank
Roger Change that 1 to 2 + 2, to a 3
Can I just mention for no reason whatsoever,
that Manchester United are the World's best
Anna team.
Nick Oh no!
No they're not
Anna Come on_
Roger I'll have____
Anna I'll have 1 beat and 2 quavers this time.
Emily You can't do that,
Anna Yes you can. Its a 3
I'm going to go for 2

Roger What's that, 8?
 Emily Its a 3
 Anna Oh right
 Nick Whatever
 Anna Yes, your go Emily
 Emily 2
 rest
 It ends in a rest. It's an amazing idea
 Anna OK, right OK , we need to choose a word with
 4 things to go at the beginning.
 Emily We've got, Hyde Park Corner,
 Roger Oxford Circus,
 Nick Oxford Circus, Queensway
 Marble Arch,Bank.
 Roger Yes, yes, or it could be
 Oxford Circus, West heath, no...Richmond
 Oxford Circus, Queensway is what I.....
 Nick Oxford Circus, Queensmay, Marble Arch,
 Bank.
 Emily Queensmay (giggles)
 All Oxford Circus, Queensway, Marble Arch,
 together Bank. (chanting in rhythm)
 I can't write this fast.
 Emily Marble Arch, Bank.
 All chant OK, now we need....3 rest 4,2
 Anna Hatton Cross, Hatton Cross.
 Halton Cross not Hatton Cross
 Emily Oh (giggles)
 Anna Halton Cross, rest,
 Wimbledon Park
 Wim -ble-don Park4
 Nick Yes there's 4 there
 Anna (inaudible)....
 Nick and then we do Wimbledon Park and then
 Anna Epping.
 How's it going?
 Teacher OK
 All Epping
 Emily Have you seen the mirror?
 Roger Can our friend see the mirror?
 No
 Teacher That's OK then
 Roger Can you?
 Teacher Yes, you're alright but you need to push on
 with practising...saying it
 Are you practising as you go along?
 (All talk)
 Anna You can say a line each

Teacher Well, you can decide on that
Nick Right
Teacher You all ought to _____
but you need to get on 'cos you haven't got
long....I'm coming to fetch you in about 6
minutes so ____ to perform to the rest of the
group.
Practise it!

Anna 2,2
Emily Elm Park
Anna Elm Park
Roger If our friend can't see the mirror then I can talk
to you here.
Anna Elm Park, Seven Sisters
and the last one?
We need a 3
Roger What about Shepherd's Bush?
Nick Shepherd's Bush
Roger Hammersmith?
Emily I think we'll use Shepherd's Bush on the next
line.
Roger No, Hammersmith, Hammersmith
Nick I didn't get Hammersmith! (on his original list of
Roger Hammersmith names)
Nick I've got more than you
Emily the next one's 3
Anna Hammersmith
Roger Hammersmith (all chant over and over)
Emily We need a 2
Anna Gant's Hill
Emily Gant's Hill
Anna Then we need another 2....erm
Emily a 2
Roger You can have Richmond
Richmond
Anna Richmond
Roger So what've we got next?
Nick We could change it to,
Richmond, Epping Broadway,
Roger Richmond, Epping Broadway.
We really want to end in Bank to get a good
end.
Shall we have a go at saying it?

Anna A line each,
Roger Oxford Circus, Queensway, Marble Arch,
Bank. (chanting in rhythm)
We don't want every single line ending with
Bank.

Roger	Oxford Circus, Queensway, Marble Arch, Bank. (chanting in rhythm)	
Emily	We all shout out Bank.	
Roger	(Chanting ...trying it out)	
Nick	Gant's Hill, Richmond, Bank.that's great isn't it?	
Anna	as you're excellent at the first line you can do that (to Roger)	
Roger	Thanks!	
Anna	but we all go Bank! (lots of discussion here)	
Nick	That Halton, that's 2 we need Hamilton (Roger begins to sing the Welsh National anthem in Welsh loudly)	
Nick	(at the same time) Wimbledon Park, Epping Wimbledon Park, Epping.	
Roger	Does anyone notice I'm singing the Welsh National Anthem?	
Nick	(Sings English National Anthem, first line) (Girls continue to chant)	
Roger	Do you dare me? (looks at camera)	Roger slowly disappears dramatically under the table while the others continue to chant and to ignore him
Anna	1,2,3, Bank (Everything is a bit chaotic at this point)	
Anna	Roger, come on!	
Roger	Please no.	
Emily	Have we got to learn this off by heart?	
Nick	No!	
Nick	Roger	
Roger	Oxford Circus, Queensway, Marble Arch, Bank. It sounds_____ I can't say anything in front of our friend.	(referring to camera....)
Nick	Can we change Epping and the rest round, please. Epping and the rest?	
Roger	It sounds like this (pulls a face) (all giggle)	
Nick	Halton Cross, Epping, Wimbledon Park _____	
Roger	It would have been a good idea but it sounds a bit funny doesn't it?	
Nick	Change Epping and the rest to there. (all argue at the same time...inaudible)	Teacher appears. They perform it to the teacher.
	They rehearse it through 1 line at a time.	

APPENDIX TRANSCRIPTION OF AUDIO
2 RECORDING WITH THE TEACHER
PRESENT - YEAR 7 LESSON 3 - CLASS A

Lesson 2, also video recorded but not transcribed here, involved lengthy rehearsal of the product composed.

Only Anna and Emily are present for this as Nick and Roger failed to turn up. The interview took place during a lunchtime - it is seen however, as part of the lesson and could be a discussion which would take place in the lesson after the performance of the product. This is not possible when recording because of interference noise. The video tape is replayed prior to this interview.

Teacher (T) What did you feel about it, the final performance?

Anna I thought it was quite good actually. I thought it was all going to come to pieces and be absolutely terrible because when we were practising it (Emily joins in here) it all went wrong.

Emily yelling at each other.

Anna but when we actually performed it, it actually went alright.

Teacher and when you actually performed it, was it what you had worked out?

Both Yes, just about.

T So, the practise had been worth it?

Both Yes.

Emily Roger was a bit funny - a bit mad.

T What in the performance...or in the practise?

Both In the practises (in chorus) Yes.

T Yes, that shows up on the film.

Anna Yes

T So what did you think of it as an idea, for you two to do something musical would be as easy, but to do it as a sort of choral speaking thing, and rhythmic, did you enjoy doing it?

Anna It was interesting, it was different.

Emily We had a rest (*a musical rest*) in it except we all ignored it and we just elongated the line which the rest was in.

T Right so you didn't actually use the rests.

Both Yes, (Emily inaudible)...

T Rests are really effective

Anna Yes, it was Nick's line wasn't it?

Emily Except we never knew when the rest was.....

T So, what exactly did you do in it -- cos although I asked you on the video you were all sort of talking at once and I didn't really know what you were saying.

Anna Its quite hard to explain
it sort of....the first bit, did we do the round first?
(this refers to the lesson 2 task to develop the

chant composed in lesson 1)

Emily No we did the erm.....

Anna we did the complicated bit.

Emily Yes, that Roger said that he made up

Anna I don't think he did

Emily No

Anna No we all chanted the last line quietly and then everyone chanted the last line quietly again except for Roger who said the first line. Thin, while Nick was saying the second line, we all said quietly the first line then Emily said the 3rd line we all did the 2nd one quietly and then everyone chanted the last line quietly again except for Roger who said the first line

Emily Yes, yelled it

Anna and then while Nick was saying the 2nd line we all said quietly the 1st line and then Emily did the 3rd line and we all did the 2nd line quietly. I said the last line and on the last line we all said 'Bank' together

T So, its a bit like a round, but it wasn't.

Anna Yeah

T Yes, and having the contrast in dynamics was quite good.

Anna Yes

T I picked that up from the video, that was a good idea.

So, how did you come to decide on what you finally chose in terms of the texture of what you did?

Emily Erm.....we just had these ideas and we couldn't be bothered to think of any more

T Right.

Did you try a real round?

Emily/Anna Well.....

T Cos your group could have managed that

Emily Well we did a round....

Anna Yes, a sort of round for the second part. (It is interesting here that they are reluctant to say

T Anything else about the way you made it up? 'No')

Anna/Emily Practising.....(muttering)

Anna Roger kept on forgetting to come in, that's why we, one bit was added because it would help Roger.

Emily because.....at same time

Anna because he kept coming in late.

Right, so you found a way.....

T very good, very clever.

What about the pitch of your voices, did you ever consider that?

Emily/Anna No

Emily Just the emphasis on.....

Anna No we didn't

T What about the words you chose in the first place. Did you spend a lot of time making them sound good?

Anna Well what we did was we drew out the chart and then, in each box we put a number for the number of syllables, for each letter. We just randomly picked them and then we put words to them and then we just said it to make sure it sounded alright. We made a few adjustments, didn't we?

Emily Yes, two of our lines sounded awful so we swapped them round.

Anna Yes we changed them a bit.

Emily a one and three.

Anna Most of the time it was just random picking so....

T Anything else about making it up, which were problems?

Emily/Anna Roger (laughs)

T Yes, he was a bit of a problem.
I'll have to look at your written evaluations to pick up your problems.

Anna One thing that was difficult, when we came up with that first complicated idea, I tried to explain it...so...that was a bit difficult to start with...explaining the idea ...erm...but once we'd worked out what exactly we were meant to be doing it didn't become too hard apart from knowing when to come in , in the right place.

T Yes, actually performing it is harder than making it up.

Anna Yes

T Did you spend an equal amount of time on the two things or did you spend more time on performing?

Emily An equal amount because we kept on swapping things round

Anna Yes, yes.

T Yes, that's how you compose isn't it?
I mean as you discover that the performance doesn't work, then you....

Anna Yes, we'd sort of make it up a bit and then

sort of perform it and then decide that bit didn't work so we'd change that round.

That's good isn't it? We ought to think about that when we're doing compositions of music because when you perform it you think, ah that doesn't work so I'll try something else.

Yes its no good just writing the notes down and saying I'm going to play this whether you like it or not.

That's right.

Yes

...'cos, later on when you get to GCSE level you tend to sit at a keyboard and you make the whole thing up before you ever perform it to anybody and there could be something there.. that its good to get it performed in some part to see something properly, so you're sort of continually changing it.

All the while Anna is saying yes to every statement.

<u>APPENDIX</u>	<u>TRANSCRIPTION OF AUDIO</u>	<u>WITH THE TEACHER</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>RECORDING</u>	
	<u>YEAR 9 LESSON 3 - CLASS C</u>	
	[EXTRACT]	
Teacher	How did you make up your mind what you were going to do?	Gemma, Amy. Laura, Sarah. and Rachel watch the video of their lesson, especially their performance at the end.
Amy	Well we had to fill in a bass line. We were playing that and we were seeing what went well with it. (talking all at once)	
	We changed the bass line to make it a bit more complicated.	
Gemma	How did you (to Gemma) work out your part?	They are very vocal and keen to talk and this makes the transcript very difficult to process.
Teacher	Well I erm..took the notes from the 12 bar blues bass	
	Rachel's part was catchy. It was slightly different from what we normally.....(all talking together)	
Gemma	...(inaudible)	
Amy	What she did was she....instead of going high,when she got to the top, she went down. She played at the same time.	
Teacher	(discussion and singing the part)	
Emma	What were you doing Emma?	
Teacher	I was just doing a rhythm	
Emma	What were you playing?	
Teacher	Bongos, yes	
	and what exactly were you playing on the piano, because you can't hear it very well?(to Laura)	
Amy	We were taking the first note of each riff of the 12 bar blues	
Teacher	You and Amy?	
Laura	Yes, and then doing.....(inaudible)	
Teacher	(interrupting)like if it was C we'd do C and E	
Amy	What were the problems?	
	Well, the blues bass line is restrictive but we tried to make the melody more interesting by adding two melodies going in opposite directions.	
Teacher	Could you have improved it?	
Laura	I think we could 've added another variation or verse if we had another week to work on it.	

APPENDIX

4

TRANSCRIPTION OF AUDIO
RECORDING

YEAR 11 LESSON 1 - INTERVIEW 3 -
Millennium -

Teacher (T) Its a really exciting piece.
Has it got a sort of, a storyline? - obviously
a fanfare - the millennium.

Jason (J) I don't think it has actually.

T It sounds as if you have real ideas about the
Millennium and how that worked into the
music.

J erm...yes it all started off, as you will
remember, as a quiet piece, more varied
instruments. I decided to fit it to the
orchestra, it gave a bit more oomph to it
with the fanfares. I suppose the middle
section is sort of looking back and then first
section and last section is what is happening
and looking to the future.

T So the middle section is quieter. In what
way is that sort of....

J I suppose it reflects a more traditional style
of playing.

T Oh thats interesting

J Thats the idea anyway.

T You do actually keep some of the themes
going throughout don't you?

J Yes, I've tried to do that. Its the trumpet
fanfare mainly that I try to keep running
through.
It is this that holds it altogether.
(discussion follows on instrumentation and
the written brief)...then,

T I think you would know that it is heralding
something important.

J It sort of actually goes back...I wrote a piece
in the summer two years ago. I put
something down in half an hour and I tried
to use some of the ideas from that into this.
It wasn't very detailed and I didn't like it as a
general piece, but parts of it, again the
fanfare....

T That's what composers do. They have ideas
that they come back to and pick up.
How many versions of this is there?

J There's two versions. One of them is
synthesized glockenspiel. I can't remember
all the instruments. It doesn't hold together

WITH THE TEACHER

Jason Morley

The teacher plays through
the first composition on the
tape recorder. They follow
Jason's score at the same
time.

	well because its not a standard group of instruments.	
Teacher	So in composing this, you've actually worked through it many times.	
J	Yes, I decided that it was better with the orchestra	
T	Yes it is interesting.	
	<u>The Daffodils</u>	Jason initiates the conversation
Jason	Now this actually repeats the first section's piano, and then you get the organ coming in with the trumpet, as a descant.	
T	Yes	
J	but the piano section is repeated with the singer for the first four verses, but...	
T	You haven't repeated it on the score? (discussion follows)	
		They listen to the composition on the tape recorder.
J	(teacher says how lovely it is with the organ) I tried to speed it up a bit to try to give the trumpet a slight feeling of life - more, if that's...	
T	Words - (discusses) With the first verse it looks as if you've actually used the words to illustrate,... the music to illustrate the words.	
J	That's what I tried to do..yes.	
J	Very good, yes...dancing in the breeze Especially with the cloud - thats why I went up rather than...you know to give it a feeling of height.	
T	Oh lovely	
J	Thats when it gets a bit possibly high - but I think someone could sing it	
T	No you can't	
J	Top C is too high!	
T	I know someone who says it can be sung. Yes, well - it is a soloists piece, thats one thing. The only other consideration is - whether a tenor could sing it an octave lower but I think it would still be the same problem.	
J	(discuss transposing) I suppose I don't want to spoil the imagery that I've tried to create.	
T		They listen to the piece on

Question Mark the tape recorder.
 Tell me all about it first.
 Jason Well basically I wanted to try something
 that was a bit more abstract. It doesn't really
 symbolise anything.... thats why its called
 'question mark' I suppose being confused
 and puzzled is another way of saying....
 This is emphasized I think by the triplets
 which presumably off-times, off-sets it
 slightly. You lose the feeling of a direct
 T rhythm a bit.
 Yes.
 J Tell me about how you made it up.
 Well, I started....I don't really remember
 T how...(laughs) I started with a pattern ...erm
 J ...a tone row.
 Yes, I went through various inversions and I
 used that in all 4 lines. Its mean't to be a
 T piano duet.
 J Right. now I don't think I actually realised
 T that.
 J No its not notated for that
 Right, right.
 but, I don't know if thats going to work
 T because sometimes the bottom tone row
 J doesn't have enough tune
 Right
 T I tried to speed it up and then slow down the
 original, sort of bring it to a height, then...
 I notice you've got some chords but could it
 be played by other instruments?
 We've got to look at the scoring, cos it must They listen to 'Question
 be playable. Mark'
 Lets listen, its really, really good. on the tape recorder.
 J
 You can't put feeling into a computer
 generated piece.
 T I tried to use syncopation - but I think its
 gone a bit jazzy.
 J It's short but really effective. I think its a
 T really good addition to your folio. I know its
 J short.
 Its not quite finished actually.
 T Right, good, excellent.
 I want to extend it a bit, and make it a bit
 more.....
 Good, lovely.